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HENRY OF MONMOUTH:

OR,

M E M O I R S

OF THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF

HENRY THE FIFTH,

AS

PRINCE OF WALES AND KING OF ENGLAND.

BY ^{James} ENDELL TYLER, B.D.

RECTOR OF ST. GILES IN THE FIELDS.

"Go, call up Cheshire and Lancashire,
And Derby hills, that are so free;
But neither married man, nor widow's son;
No widow's curse shall go with me."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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TO HER MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY
THE QUEEN.

MADAM,

THE gracious intimation of your Royal pleasure that these Memoirs of your renowned Predecessor should be dedicated to your Majesty, while it increases my solicitude, suggests at the same time new and cheering anticipations. I cannot but hope that, appearing in the world under the auspices of your great name, the religious and moral purposes which this work is designed to serve will be more widely and effectually realised.

Under a lively sense of the literary defects which render these volumes unworthy of so august a patronage, to one point I may revert with feelings of satisfaction and encouragement. I have

gone only where Truth seemed to lead me on the way: and this, in your Majesty's judgment, I am assured will compensate for many imperfections.

That your Majesty may ever abundantly enjoy the riches of HIS favour who is the Spirit of Truth, and having long worn your diadem here in honour and peace, in the midst of an affectionate and happy people, may resign it in exchange for an eternal crown in heaven, is the prayer of one who rejoices in the privilege of numbering himself,

Madam,

Among your Majesty's

Most faithful and devoted

Subjects and servants.

J. ENDELL TYLER.

24, BEDFORD SQUARE,

MAY 24, 1838.

PREFACE.

MEMOIRS such as these of Henry of Monmouth might doubtless be made more attractive and entertaining were their Author to supply the deficiencies of authentic records by the inventions of his fancy, and adorn the result of careful inquiry into matters of fact by the descriptive imagery and colourings of fiction. To a writer, also, who could at once handle the pen of the biographer and of the poet, few names would offer a more ample field for the excursive range of historical romance than the life of Henry of Monmouth. From the day of his first compulsory visit to Ireland, abounding as that time does with deeply interesting incidents, to his last hour in the now-ruined castle of Vincennes ;—or rather, from his mother's espousals to the interment of his earthly remains within the sacred precincts of Westminster, every period teems with animating suggestions. So far, however, from possessing such adventitious recommendations, the point on which (rather perhaps than any other) an apology might be expected for this work, is, that it has freely tested

by the standard of truth those delineations of Henry's character which have contributed to immortalize our great historical dramatist. The Author, indeed, is willing to confess that he would gladly have withdrawn from the task of assaying the substantial accuracy and soundness of Shakspeare's historical and biographical views, could he have done so safely and without a compromise of principle. He would have avoided such an inquiry, not only in deference to the acknowledged rule which does not suffer a poet to be fettered by the rigid shackles of unbending facts; but from a disinclination also to interfere, even in appearance, with the full and free enjoyment of those exquisite scenes of humour, wit, and nature, in which Henry is the hero, and his "riotous, reckless companions" are subordinate in dramatical excellence only to himself. The Author may also not unwillingly grant, that (with the majority of those who give a tone to the "form and pressure" of the age) Shakspeare has done more to invest the character of Henry with a never-dying interest beyond the lot of ordinary monarchs, than the bare records of historical verity could ever have effected. Still he feels that he had no alternative. He must either have ascertained the historical worth of those scenic representations, or have suffered to remain in their full force the deep and prevalent impressions, as to Henry's principles and conduct, which owe, if not their origin, yet, at least, much of their universality

and vividness, to Shakspeare. The poet is dear, and our early associations are dear; and pleasures often tasted without satiety are dear: but to every rightly balanced mind Truth will be dearer than all.

It must nevertheless be here intimated, that these volumes are neither exclusively, nor yet especially, designed for the antiquarian student. The Author has indeed sought for genuine information at every fountain-head accessible to him; but he has prepared the result of his researches for the use (he would trust, for the improvement as well as the gratification,) of the general reader. And whilst he has not consciously omitted any essential reference, he has guarded against interrupting the course of his narrative by an unnecessary accumulation of authorities. He is, however, compelled to confess that he rises from this very limited sphere of inquiry under an impression, which grew stronger and deeper as his work advanced, that, before a history of our country can be produced worthy of a place among the records of mankind, the still hidden treasures of the metropolis and of our universities, together with the stores which are known to exist in foreign libraries, must be studied with far more of devoted care and zealous perseverance than have hitherto been bestowed upon them. That the honest and able student, however unwearied in zeal and industry, may be supplied with the indispens-

able means of verifying what tradition has delivered down, enucleating difficulties, rectifying mistakes, reconciling apparent inconsistencies, clearing up doubts, and removing that mass of confusion and error under which the truth often now lies buried,—our national history must be made a subject of national interest. It is a maxim of our law, and the constant practice of our courts of justice, never to admit evidence unless it be the best which under the circumstances can be obtained. Were this principle of jurisprudence recognised and adopted in historical criticism, the student would carefully ascend to the first witnesses of every period, on whom modern writers (however eloquent or sagacious) must depend for their information. How lamentably devoid of authority and credit is the work of the most popular and celebrated of our modern English historians, in consequence of his unhappy neglect of this fundamental principle, will be made palpably evident by the instances which could not be left unnoticed even within the narrow range of these *Memoirs*. And the Author is generally persuaded that, without a far more comprehensive and intimate acquaintance with original documents than our writers have possessed, or apparently have thought it their duty to cultivate, error will continue to be propagated as heretofore; and our annals will abound with surmises and misrepresentations, instead of being the guardian depositories of historical verity. Only by the acknowledgment

and application of the principle here advocated will England be supplied with those monuments of our race, those "POSSESSIONS FOR EVER," as the Prince of Historians^a once named them, which may instruct the world in the philosophy of moral cause and effect, exhibit honestly and clearly the natural workings of the human heart, and diffuse through the mass of our fellow-creatures a practical assurance that piety, justice, and charity form the only sure groundwork of a people's glory and happiness; while religious and moral depravity in a nation, no less than in an individual, leads, (tardily it may be and remotely, but by ultimate and inevitable consequence,) to failure and degradation.

In those portions of his work which have a more immediate bearing upon religious principles and conduct, the Author has not adopted the most exciting mode of discussing the various subjects which have naturally fallen under his review. Party spirit, though it seldom fails to engender a more absorbing interest for the time, and often clothes a subject with an importance not its own, will find in these pages no response to its sentiments, under whatever character it may give utterance to them. In these departments of his inquiry, to himself far the most interesting, (and many such there are, especially in the second volume,) the Author trusts that he has been guided by the Apostolical maxim of "SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE." He has not

^a Thucydides.

willingly advanced a single sentiment which should unnecessarily cause pain to any individual or to any class of men ; he has not been tempted by morbid delicacy or fear to suppress or disguise his view of the very TRUTH.

The reader will readily perceive that, with reference to the foreign and domestic policy of our country,—the advances of civilization,—the manners of private life, as well in the higher as in the more humble grades of society,—the state of literature,—the progress of the English constitution,—the condition and discipline of the army, which Henry greatly improved,—and the rise and progress of the royal navy, of which he was virtually the founder, many topics are either purposely avoided, or only incidentally and cursorily noticed. To one point especially (a subject in itself most animating and uplifting, and intimately interwoven with the period embraced by these Memoirs,) he would have rejoiced to devote a far greater portion of his book; had it been compatible with the immediate design of his undertaking ;—THE PROMISE AND THE DAWN OF THE REFORMATION.

However the value of his labours may be ultimately appreciated, the Author confidently trusts that their publication can do no disservice to the cause of truth, of sound morality, and of pure religion. He would hope, indeed, that in one point

at least the power of an example of pernicious tendency might be weakened by the issue of his investigation. If the results of these inquiries be acquiesced in as sound and just, no young man can be encouraged by Henry's example (as it is feared many, especially in the higher classes, have been encouraged,) in early habits of moral delinquency, with the intention of extricating himself in time from the dominion of his passions, and of becoming, like Henry, in after-life a pattern of religion and virtue, "the mirror of every grace and excellence." The divine, the moralist, and the historian know that authenticated instances of such sudden moral revolutions in character are very rare,—exceptions to the general rule; and among those exceptions we cannot be justified in numbering Henry of Monmouth.

He was bold and merciful and kind, but he was no libertine, in his youth; he was brave and generous and just, but he was no persecutor, in his manhood. On the throne he upheld the royal authority with mingled energy and mildness, and he approved himself to his subjects as a wise and beneficent King; in his private individual capacity he was a bountiful and considerate, though strict and firm master, a warm and sincere friend, a faithful and loving husband. He passed through life under the habitual sense of an overruling Providence; and, in his premature death, he left us the example of a Christian's patient and pious resignation to the Divine Will. As

long as he lived, he was an object of the most ardent and enthusiastic admiration, confidence, and love; and, whilst the English monarchy shall remain among the unforgotten things on earth, his memory will be honoured, and his name will be enrolled among the NOBLE and the GOOD.

TABLE OF THE PRINCIPAL EVENTS, IN THEIR CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER.

* * * Those years, months, or days, respectively, to which an asterisk is attached, are not considered to have been so fully ascertained as the other dates.

1340*	Feb.*	John of Gaunt born.
1340 }		Earl of Northumberland, Hotspur's father,
1341 }		born, before Nov. 19, 1341.
1359	May 19,	John of Gaunt married to Blanche.
1358 }		Owyn Glyndowr born, before Sept. 3, 1359.
1359 }		
1366	April 6,	Henry Bolinbroke born.
1365 }		Henry Percy (Hotspur) born before 30th
1366 }	May 20,* }	Oct. 1366.
1367	Jan.	Richard II. born at Bourdeaux.
1369*		Blanche, wife of John of Gaunt died.
1371*		John of Gaunt married Constance.
1376	June 8,	Edward the Black Prince died.
1377	June 21,	King Edward III. died.
1378	Nov.	Hotspur first bore arms at Berwick.
1381		Bolinbroke nearly slain by the rioters.
1382		Richard II. married to Queen Anne.
1384	Dec. 31,	Wickliffe's death.
1386*		Bolinbroke married Mary Bohun.
1387		John of Gaunt went to Spain.
1387*	Aug. 9,*	HENRY born at MONMOUTH.
1388		Hotspur taken prisoner by the Scots.
1388		Thomas Duke of Clarence born.
1389	Nov. 9,	Isabel, Richard II.'s wife, born.

1389*	Nov. *	John of Gaunt returned from Spain.
1389*		John Duke of Bedford born.
1390*		Humfrey Duke of Gloucester born.
1390 }		Bolinbroke visited Barbary.
1391 }		
1392 }		Bolinbroke visited Prussia and the Holy Sepulchre.
1393 }		
1394*		Mary, HENRY's mother, died.
1394*		Constance, John of Gaunt's wife, died.
1394	June 7,	Anne, Richard II.'s Queen, died.
1396		John of Gaunt recalled from Aquitaine by Richard II.
1396		John of Gaunt married Katharine Swynford.
1397		Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, banished.
1397	Sept. 29,	Bolinbroke created Duke of Hereford.
1397*		John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, banished.
1397	Nov. 4,	Richard II. married to Isabel.
1398*		Henry of Monmouth resided in Oxford.
1398	July 14,	Henry Beaufort consecrated Bishop of Lincoln.
1398	Sept. 16,	Bolinbroke and Norfolk at Coventry.
1398		Bolinbroke banished.
1399	Feb. 3,	John of Gaunt died.
1399	May 29,	Richard II. sailed for Ireland.
1399	June 23,	HENRY of Monmouth knighted.
1399	June 28,	News of Bolinbroke's designs reached London.
1399	July 4,	Bolinbroke landed at Ravenspur.
1399	August,	HENRY shut up in Trym Castle.
1399	August,	Richard landed at Milford.
1399	Aug. 14,	Richard fell into Bolinbroke's hands.
1399	August,	Bolinbroke sent to Ireland for HENRY.
1399	August,	Death of the young Duke of Gloucester.
1399	Sept. 1,	Bolinbroke brought Richard captive to London.
1399	Oct. 1,	Richard's resignation of the crown read in Parliament.

- 1399 Oct. 13, Bolinbroke crowned as Henry IV.
- 1399 Oct. 15, HENRY created PRINCE of Wales.
- 1400 Jan. 4, Conspiracy against the King at Windsor.
- 1400* Feb. 14,* Richard II. died at Pontefract.
- 1400* Oct. 25,* Chaucer died.
- 1400 June Henry IV. proceeded to Scotland.
- 1400 June 23, Lord Grey of Ruthyn's letter to HENRY.
- 1400 Sept. 19, First proclamation against the Welsh.
- 1400 Owyn Glyndowr in open rebellion.
- 1401 HENRY in Wales, before April 10.
- 1401 April 10, Hotspur's first Letter.
- 1401* Sept. 13,* KATHARINE, HENRY'S Queen, born.
- 1401* Nov. 11,* Restoration of Isabel.
- 1402 April 3, Henry IV. espoused to Joan of Navarre.
- 1402 June 12,* Edmund Mortimer taken prisoner.
- 1432 Sept. 14, Battle of Homildon.
- 1402* Nov. 30,* Edmund Mortimer married to a daughter of
Owyn Glyndowr.
- 1403 March 7, HENRY appointed Lieutenant of Wales.
- 1403* May 30, HENRY'S Letter to the Council.
- 1403 July 21, Battle of Shrewsbury.
- 1404 May 10, Glyndowr dated "the fourth year of our
Principality."
- 1404 June 10, Welsh with Frenchmen overran Archen-
field.
- 1404 June 25, HENRY'S letter to his father.
- 1404 Oct. 6, Parliament at Coventry.
- 1405 Feb. 20, Sons of the Earl of March stolen from
Windsor.
- 1405 March 1, Crown settled on HENRY and his brothers.
- 1405 March 11, Battle of Grosmont.
- 1405 May, Revolt of the Earl of Northumberland and
Bardolf.
- 1405 June 8, Scrope, Archbishop of York, beheaded.
- 1406 June 7, Testimony of the Commons to HENRY'S ex-
cellences.
- 1406* June 29,* Isabel married to Angouleme.
- 1407* Nov. 1,* HENRY went to Scotland.

1408	Feb. 28,*	Earl of Northumberland, Hotspur's father, fell in battle.
1408	July 8,	HENRY in London, as President of the Council.
1409	Feb. 1,	HENRY, Guardian of the Earl of March.
1409	Feb. 28,	HENRY, Warden of Cinque Ports and Constable of Dover.
1409*	Sept. 13,*	Death of Isabel, Richard II.'s widow.
1410	March 5,	Warrant for the burning of Badby.
1410	March 18,	HENRY, Captain of Calais.
1410	June 16,	HENRY sate as President of the Council.
1410	June 18,	Do. do.
1410	June 19,	Do. do.
1410	June 23,	Affray in Eastcheap, by the Lords Thomas and John, his brothers.
1410	July 22,	HENRY, as President.
1410	July 29,	Do.
1410	July 30,	Do.
1411	March 19,	HENRY with his father at Lambeth.
1411	August,*	Duke of Burgundy obtained succour.
1411	Nov. 3,	Parliament opened.
1411	Nov. 10,	Battle of St. Cloud.
1412	May 18,	Treaty with the Duke of Orleans.
1412*	June 30,*	HENRY came to London attended by "Lords and Gentils."
1412	July 9,	The Lord Thomas created Duke of Clarence.
1412*	Sept. 23,*	He came again with "a huge people."
1413	Feb. 3,	Parliament opened.
1413	March 20,	Henry IV. died.
1413	April 9,	HENRY V. CROWNED.
1413	May 15,	Parliament at Westminster.
1413	June 26,	Convocation of the Clergy.
1413		Lord Cobham cited.
1413		Lord Cobham escaped from the Tower.
1414	Jan. 10,	Affair of St. Giles' Field.
1414	April 20,	Parliament at Leicester.
1414		HENRY founded Sion and Shene.
1414		Council of Constance.

- 1415 May 4, The Council of Constance condemned Wickliffe's memory, and commanded the exhumation of his bones.
- 1415 July 6, John Huss condemned.
- 1415 July 20, Conspiracy at Southampton.
- 1415 Aug. 11, HENRY sailed for Normandy.
- 1415 Sept. 15, Death of Bishop of Norwich in the camp.
- 1415 Sept. 22, Surrender of Harfleur.
- 1415 Clayton and Gurmyn burnt for heresy.
- 1415 Oct. 25, Battle of AGINCOURT.
- 1415 Nov. 16, HENRY returned to England.
- 1415 Nov. 22, Thanksgiving in London.
- 1416 April 29, Emperor Sigismund visited England.
- 1416 May 30, Jerome of Prague burnt.
- 1416 Aug. 15, League signed by HENRY and Sigismund.
- 1417 July 23, HENRY's second expedition.
- 1417 Sept. 4, Surrender of Caen.
- 1417 Dec. Execution of Lord Cobham.
- 1418 July 1, Rouen besieged.
- 1419 Jan. 19, Rouen taken.
- 1419 May 30, HENRY and KATHARINE first met.
- 1419* July 7, HENRY's letter concerning Oriel College.
- 1420 May 30, HENRY and Katharine married.
- 1420 July, Katharine lodged in the camp before Melun.
- 1420 HENRY and Katharine, with the King and Queen of France, entered Paris.
- 1421 Jan. 31, HENRY and Katharine arrived in England.
- 1421 Feb. 23, Katharine crowned in Westminster.
- 1421 March 23, They passed their Easter at Leicester.
- 1421 { Between } They travelled through the greater part of
 { March & } England.
 { May, }
- 1421 March 23, Death of the Duke of Clarence.
- 1421 May 26, Taylor condemned to imprisonment for heresy.
- 1421 June 1, HENRY left London on his third expedition.

- | | | |
|------|----------|---|
| 1421 | June 10, | HENRY landed at Calais. |
| 1421 | Oct. 6, | Siege of Meaux began, and lasted till the
April following. |
| 1421 | Dec. 6, | HENRY's son born at Windsor. |
| 1422 | May 21, | Katharine landed at Harfleur. |
| 1422 | | HENRY met her at the Bois de Vincennes. |
| 1422 | | They entered Paris together. |
| 1422 | Aug. | HENRY left Katharine at Senlis. |
| 1422 | Aug. 31, | DEATH of HENRY. |
| 1423 | March 1, | William Taylor burnt for heresy. |

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MEMOIRS

OF

HENRY OF MONMOUTH.

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1387—1398.

HENRY THE FIFTH was the son of Henry of Bolinbroke and Mary daughter of Humfrey Bohun, Earl of Hereford. No direct and positive evidence has yet been discovered to fix with unerring accuracy the day or the place of his birth. If however we assume the statement of the chroniclers^a to be true, that he was born at Monmouth on the ninth day of August in the year 1387,^b history supplies many

^a Monomothi in Wallia natus v. Id. Aug.—Pauli Jov. Ang. Reg. Chron.; William of Worcester, &c.

^b At the foot of the Wardrobe Account of Henry Earl of Derby from 30th September 1387 to 30th September 1388,

ascertained facts not only consistent with that hypothesis, but in confirmation of it; whilst none are found to throw upon it the faintest shade of improbability. At first sight it might perhaps appear strange that the exact time of the birth as well of Henry of Monmouth, as of his father, two successive kings of England, should even yet remain the subject of conjecture, tradition, and inference; whilst the day and place of the birth of Henry VI. is matter of historical record. A single reflection, however, on the circumstances of their respective births, renders the absence of all precise testimony in the one case natural; whilst it would have been altogether unintelligible in the other. When Henry of Bolinbroke and Henry of Monmouth were born, their fathers were subjects, and nothing of national interest was at the time associated with their appearance in the world; at Henry of Windsor's birth he was the acknowledged heir to the throne both of England and of France.

To what extent Henry of Monmouth's future character and conduct were, under Providence, affected by the circumstances of his family and its several members, it would perhaps be less philosophical than presumptuous to define. But, that

(and unfortunately no account of the Duke of Lancaster's expenses is as yet found extant before that very year,) an item occurs of 34*l.* 12*s.* 5*d.*, paid 24th September 1386, for the household expenses of the Earl and his family at Monmouth. This proves that his father made the castle of Monmouth his residence within less than a year of the date assigned for Henry's birth.

those circumstances were peculiarly calculated to influence him in his principles and views and actions, will be acknowledged by every one who becomes acquainted with them, and who is at the same time in the least degree conversant with the growth and workings of the human mind. It must, therefore, fall within the province of the inquiry instituted in these pages, to take a brief review of the domestic history of Henry's family through the years of his childhood and early youth.

John, surnamed "of Gaunt," from Ghent or Gand in Flanders, the place of his birth, was the fourth son of King Edward the Third. At a very early age he married Blanche, daughter and heir-ess of Henry Plantagenet, Duke of Lancaster, great-grandson of Henry the Third.^c The time of his marriage with Blanche,^d though recorded with sufficient precision, is indeed comparatively of little consequence ; whilst the date of their son Henry's birth, from the influence which the age of a father may have on the destinies of his child, becomes matter of much importance to those who take any interest

^c His wife's sister, Matilda, married to William, Duke of Holland and Zealand, dying without issue, John of Gaunt succeeded to the undivided estates and honours of the late duke.

^d Froissart reports that Henry Bolinbroke was a handsome young man ; and declares that he never saw two such noble dames, nor ever should were he to live a thousand years, so good, liberal, and courteous, as his mother the Lady Blanche, and "the late Queen of England," Philippa of Hainault, wife of Edward the Third. These were the mother, and the consort of John of Gaunt.

in the history of their grandson, Henry of Monmouth. On this point it has been already intimated that no conclusive evidence is directly upon record. The principal facts, however, which enable us to draw an inference of high probability, are associated with so pleasing and so exemplary a custom, though now indeed fallen into great desuetude among us, that to review them compensates for any disappointment which might be felt from the want of absolute certainty in the issue of our research. It was Henry of Bolinbroke's custom^e every year on the Feast of the Lord's Supper, that is, on the Thursday before Easter, to clothe as many poor persons as equalled the number of years which he had completed on the preceding birthday; and by examining the accounts still preserved in the archives of the Duchy of Lancaster, the details of which would be altogether uninteresting in this place, we are led to infer that Henry Bolinbroke was born on the 4th of April 1366. Blanche, his mother, survived the birth of Bolinbroke probably not more than three years. Whether this lady found in John of Gaunt a faithful and loving husband, or whether his libertinism caused her to pass her short life in disappointment and sorrow, no authentic document enables us to pronounce. It is, however, impossible to close our eyes against

* For this fact and the several items by which it is substantiated, the Author is indebted to the kindness and antiquarian researches of William Hardy, Esq. of the Duchy of Lancaster office. These accounts begin to date from September 30th 1381.

the painful fact, that Catherine Swynford, who was the partner of his guilt during the life of his second wife, Constance, had been an inmate of his family, as the confidential attendant on his wife Blanche, and the governess of her daughters, Philippa and Elizabeth of Lancaster. That he afterwards, by a life of abandoned profligacy, disgraced the religion which he professed, is, unhappily, put beyond conjecture or vague rumour. Though we cannot infer from any expenses about her funeral and her memory, that Blanche was the sole object of his affections, (the most lavish costliness at the tomb of the departed too often being only in proportion to the unkindness shown to the living,) yet it may be worth observing, that in 1372 we find an entry in the account, of 20*l.* paid to two chaplains (together with the expenses of the altar) to say masses for her soul. He was then already^f married to his second wife, Constance, daughter of Peter the Cruel, King of Castile. By this lady, whom he often calls "the Queen," he appears to have had only one child, married, it is said, to Henry III. King of Castile.^g Constance, the mother, is re-

^f In 1387 the Duke of Lancaster, accompanied by Constance and a numerous retinue, went to Spain to claim his wife's rights; and he succeeded in obtaining from the King of Spain very large sums in hand, and hostages for the payment of 10,000*l.* annually to himself and his duchess for life. Wals. Neust. 544.

^g There is an order, dated June 6th, 1372, to lodge two pipes of good wine in Kenilworth Priory, and to hasten with all speed Dame Ilote, the midwife, to the Queen Constance at Hertford

presented to have been one of the most amiable and exemplary persons of the age, "above other women innocent and devout;" and from her husband she deserved treatment far different from what it was her unhappy lot to experience. But however severe were her sufferings, she probably concealed them within her own breast : and she neither left her husband nor abandoned her duties in disgust. It is indeed possible, though in the highest degree improbable, that whilst his unprincipled conduct was too notorious to be concealed from others, she was not herself made fully acquainted with his infidelity towards her. At all events we may indulge in the belief that she proved to her husband's only legiti-

on horse or in carriage as should be best for her ease. The same person attended the late Duchess Blanche.

The Author has lately discovered on the Pell Rolls a payment, dated 21st February 1373, which refers to the birth of a daughter, and at the same time informs us that his future wife was then probably a member of his household. "To Catherine Swynford twenty marks for announcing to the King (Richard the Second) the birth of a daughter of the Queen of Spain, consort of John, King of Castile and Leon, and Duke of Lancaster."

The marriage of John of Gaunt with Catherine Swynford took place only the second year after the death of Constance, and seems to have excited among the nobility equal surprise and disgust. "The great ladies of England, (as Stowe reports,) as the Duchess of Gloucester, &c. disdained that she should be matched with the Duke of Lancaster, and by that means accounted second person in the realm, and be preferred in room before them."

King Richard however made her a handsome present of a ring, at the same time that he presented one to Henry, Earl of Derby, (Henry IV.) and another to Lady Beauchamp. Pell Rolls.

mate son, Henry of Bolinbroke, a kind and watchful mother.

At that period of our history, persons married at a much earlier age than is usually the case among us now; and the espousals of young people often preceded for some years the period of quitting their parents' home, and living together, as man and wife. In the year 1381 Henry, at that time only fifteen years of age, was espoused ^b to his future wife, Mary

^b In this same year Bolinbroke's life was put into imminent peril during the insurrection headed by Wat Tiler. The rebels broke into the Tower of London, though it was defended by some brave knights and soldiers; seized and murdered the Archbishop and others; and, carrying the heads of their victims on pikes, proceeded in a state of fury to John of Gaunt's palace at the Savoy, which they utterly destroyed and burnt to the ground. Gaunt himself was in the North: but his son Bolinbroke was in the Tower of London, and owed his life to the interposition of one John Ferrour of Southwark. This is a fact not generally known to historians; and since the document which records it, bears testimony to Bolinbroke's spirit of gratitude, it will not be thought out of place to allude to it here. This same John Ferrour, with Sir Thomas Blount and others, was tried in the Castle of Oxford for high treason, in the first year of Henry IV. Blount and the others were condemned and executed; but to John Ferrour a free pardon, dated Monday after the Epiphany, was given, "our Lord the King remembering that in the reign of Richard the Second, during the insurrection of the Counties of Essex and Kent, the said John saved the King's life in the midst of that commonalty, in a wonderful and kind manner, whence the King happily remains alive unto this day. For since every good whatever naturally and of right requires another good in return, the King of his especial grace freely pardons the said John." Plac. Cor. in Cast. Oxon. 1 H. IV.

Bohun, daughter of the Earl of Hereford, who had then not reached her twelfth year. These espousals were in those days accompanied by the religious service of matrimony, and the bride assumed the title of her espoused husband.ⁱ

We shall probably not be in error, if we fix the period of the Countess of Derby leaving her mother's for her husband's roof somewhere in the year 1386, when he was twenty, and she sixteen years old; and we are not without reason for believing that they made Monmouth Castle their home.

Some modern writers affirm that this was the favourite residence of John of Gaunt's family: but it is very questionable whether from having themselves experienced the beauty and loveliness of the spot,

ⁱ Thus, in a warrant, dated 6th March 1381, an order is given by the Duke for payment to a Goldsmith in London, of 10*l.* 18*s.* for a present made by our dear daughter Philippa, to our very dear daughter Mary, Countess of Derby, on the day of her marriage; and also "40 shillings for as many pence put upon the book on the day of the espousals of our much beloved son, the Earl of Derby." Eight marks are ordered to be paid for "a ruby given by us to our very dear daughter Mary:" 13*s.* 4*d.* for the offering at the mass. Ten marks from us to the King's minstrels being there on the same day; and ten marks to four minstrels of our brother the Earl of Cambridge being there; and fifty marks to the officers of our cousin, the Countess of Hereford! On the 31st of January following, the Duke lays himself under a bond to pay to "Dame Bohun, Countess of Hereford, her mother, the sum of one hundred marks annually, for the charge and cost of his daughter-in-law, Mary, Countess of Derby, until the said Mary shall attain the full age of fourteen years."

they have not been unconsciously tempted to venture this assertion without historical evidence. Monmouth is indeed situated in one of the fairest and loveliest valleys within the four seas of Britain. Near its centre, on a rising ground between the river Monnow (from which the town derives its name) and the Wye, and not far from their confluence, the ruins of the Castle are still visible. The poet Gray looked over it from the side of the Kymin Hill, when he described the scene before him as "the delight of his eyes, and the very seat of pleasure." With his testimony, unbiassed as it was by local attachment, it would be unwise to mingle the feelings of affection entertained by one whose earliest associations, "redolent of joy and youth," can scarcely rescue his judgment from the suspicion of partiality. At that time John of Gaunt's estates and princely mansions studded, at various distances, the whole land of England from its northern border to the southern coast. And whether he allowed Henry of Bolinbroke to select for himself from the ample pages of his rent-roll the spot to which he would take his bride, or whether he assigned it of his own choice to his son as the fairest of his possessions; or whether any other cause determined the place of Henry the Fifth's birth, we have no reasonable ground for doubting that he was born in the Castle of Monmouth, on the 9th of August 1387.

Of Monmouth Castle, the dwindling ruins are now very scanty, and in point of architecture present

nothing worthy of an antiquary's research. They are washed by the streams of the Monnow, and are embosomed in gardens and orchards, clothing the knoll on which they stand; the aspect of the southern walls, and the rocky character of the soil admirably adapting them for the growth of the vine, and the ripening of its fruits. In the memory of some old inhabitants, who were not gathered to their fathers when the Author could first take an interest in such things, and who often amused his childhood with tales of former days, the remains of the Hall of Justice were still traceable within the narrowed pile; and the crumbling bench on which the Justices of the Circuit once sate, was often usurped by the boys in their mock trials of judge and jury. Somewhat more than half a century ago, a gentleman whose garden reached to one of the last remaining towers, had reason to be thankful for a marked interposition in his behalf of the protecting hand of Providence. He was enjoying himself on a summer's evening in an alcove built under the shelter and shade of the castle, when a gust of wind blew out the candle by his side, just at the time when he felt disposed to replenish and rekindle his pipe. He went consequently with the lantern in his hand towards his house, intending to renew his evening's recreation; but he had scarcely reached the door when the wall fell, burying his retreat, and the entire slope, with its shrubs and flowers and fruits, under one mass of ruin.

From this castle, tradition says, that being a sickly child, Henry was taken to Courtfield, at the distance of six or seven miles from Monmouth, to be nursed there. That tradition is doubtless very ancient; and the cradle itself in which Henry is said to have been rocked, was shown there till within these few years, when it was sold, and taken from the house. It has since changed hands, if it be any longer in existence. The local traditions, indeed, in the neighbourhood of Courtfield and Goodrich are almost universally mingled with the very natural mistake that, when Henry of Monmouth was born, his father was king; and so far a shade of improbability may be supposed to invest them all alike; yet the variety of them in that one district, and the total absence of any stories relative to the same event on every other side of Monmouth, should seem to countenance a belief that some real foundation existed for the broad and general features of these traditionary tales. Thus, though the account acquiesced in by some writers, that the Marchioness of Salisbury was Henry of Monmouth's nurse at Courtfield, may have originated in an officious anxiety to supply an infant prince with a nurse suitable to his royal birth; still, probably, that appendage would not have been annexed to a story utterly without foundation, and consequently throws no incredibility on the fact that the eldest son of the young Earl of Derby was nursed at Courtfield. Thus, too, though the recorded salutation of the

ferryman of Goodrich congratulates his Majesty on the birth of a noble prince, as the King was hastening from his court and palace of Windsor to his castle of Monmouth; yet the unstationary habits of Bolingbroke, his love of journeyings and travels, and his restlessness at home, render it very probable that he was absent from Monmouth even when the hour of perilous anxiety was approaching; and thus on his return homeward (perhaps too from Richard's court at Windsor) the first tidings of the safety of his Countess and the birth of the young lord may have saluted him as he crossed the Wye at Goodrich Ferry. So again in the little village of Cruse, lying between the church and the castle of Goodrich, the cottagers still tell, from father to son, as they have told for centuries over their winter's hearth, how the herald, hurrying from Monmouth to Goodrich fast as whip and spur could urge his steed onward, with the tidings of the Prince of Wales' birth, fell headlong, (the horse dropping under him in the short, steep, and rugged lane leading to the ravine, beyond which the castle stands,) and was killed on the spot. No doubt the idea of its being the news of a prince's birth, that was thus posted on, has added, in the imagination of the villagers, to the horse's fleetness and the breathless impetuosity of the messenger; but it is very probable that the news of the young lord's birth, heir to the dukedom of Lancaster, should have been hastened from the castle of Monmouth to Good-

rich ; and there is no solid reason for discrediting the story.

Still, beyond tradition, there is no evidence at all to fix the young lord either at Courtfield, or indeed at Monmouth, for any period subsequently to his birth. On the contrary, several items of expense in the "Wardrobe account of Henry, Earl of Derby," would induce us to infer either that the tradition is unfounded, or that at the utmost the infant lord was nursed at Courtfield only for a few months. In that account^j we find an entry of a charge for a "*long gown*" for the young lord Henry ; and also the payment of 2*l.* to a midwife for her attendance on the Countess during her confinement at the birth of the young lord Thomas, the gift of the Earl, "*at London.*" By this document it is proved that Henry's younger brother, the future Duke of Clarence, was born before October 1388, and that some time in the preceding year Henry was himself still in the long robes of an infant ; and that the family had removed from Monmouth to London. In the Wardrobe expenses of the Countess for the same year, we find several items of sums defrayed for the clothes of the young lords Henry and Thomas together, but no allusion whatever to the brothers being separate : one entry,^k fixing Thomas and his nurse at Kenil-

^j Between 30th Sept. 1387 and 1st Oct. 1388.

^k An item of five yards of cloth for the bed of the nurse of Thomas at Kenilworth ; and an ell of canvass for his cradle.

worth soon after his birth, leaves no ground for supposing that his elder brother was either at Monmouth or at Courtfield. It may be matter of disappointment and of surprise that Henry's name does not occur in connexion with the place of his birth in any single contemporary document now known. The fact, however, is so. But whilst the place of Henry's nursing is thus left in uncertainty, the name of his nurse—in itself a matter not of the slightest importance—is made known to us not only in the Wardrobe account of his mother, but also by a gratifying circumstance, which bears direct testimony to his own kind and grateful, and considerate and liberal mind. Her name was Johanna Waring; on whom, very shortly after he ascended the throne, he settled an annuity of 20*l*. “in consideration of good service done to him in former days.”¹

Very few incidents are recorded which can throw light upon Henry's childhood, and for those few we are indebted chiefly to the dry details of account-books. In these many particular items of expense occur relative as well to Henry as to his brothers; which, probably, would differ very little from those of other young noblemen of England at that period of her history. The records of the Duchy of Lan-

¹ This is one of those incidents, occurring now and then, the discovery of which repays the antiquary or the biographer for wading, with toilsome search, through a confused mass of uninteresting details, and often encourages him to persevere when he begins to feel weary and disappointed.

caster provide us with a very scanty supply of such particulars as convey any interesting information on the circumstances and occupations and amusements of Henry of Monmouth. From these records, however, we learn that he was attacked by some complaint, probably both sudden and dangerous, in the spring of 1395; for among the receiver's accounts is found the charge of "6s. 8d. for Thomas Pye, and a horse hired at London, March 18th, to carry him to Leicester with all speed, on account of the illness of the young lord Henry." In the year 1397, when he was just ten years old, a few entries occur, somewhat interesting, as intimations of his boyish pursuits. Such are the charge of "8d. paid by the hands of Adam Garston for harpstrings purchased for the harp of the young lord Henry," and "12d. to Stephen Furbour for a new scabbard of a sword for young lord Henry," and "1s. 6d. for three-fourths of an ounce of tissue of black silk bought at London of Margaret Stranson for a sword of young lord Henry." Whilst we cannot but be sometimes amused by the minuteness with which the expenditure of the smallest sum in so large an establishment as John of Gaunt's is detailed, these little incidents prepare us for the statement given of Henry's early youth by the chroniclers,—that he was fond both of minstrelsy and of military exercises.

The same dry pages, however, assure us that his more severe studies were not neglected. In the accounts for the year ending February 1396, we

find a charge of "4s. for seven books of Grammar contained in one volume, and bought at London for the young Lord Henry." The receiver-general's record informs us of the name of the lord Humfrey's tutor;^m but who was appointed to instruct the young lord Henry does not appear; nor can we tell how soon he was put under the guidance of Henry Beaufort. If, as we have reason to believe, he had that celebrated man as his instructor, or at least the superintendent of his studies, in Oxford so early as 1399, we may not, perhaps, be mistaken in conjecturing, that even this volume of Grammar was first learned under the direction of the future Cardinal.

Scanty as are the materials from which we must weave our opinion with regard to the first years of Henry of Monmouth, they are sufficient to suggest many reflections upon the advantages as well as the unfavourable circumstances which attended him: We must first, however, revert to a few more particulars relative to his family and its chief members.

His father, who was then about twenty-four years of age, certainly left Englandⁿ between the 6th of

^m "Thomæ Rothwell informanti Humfridum filium Domini Regis pro salario suo de termino Paschæ, 13s. 4d."—1 Hen. IV.

ⁿ The treasurer's account, during the Earl's absence, contains some items which remove all doubt from this statement: among others, 20*l.* to Lancaster the herald, on Nov. 5, going toward England; and in the same month, to three "persui-

May 1390 and the 30th of April 1391; and proceeded to Barbary. During his absence his Countess was delivered of Humfrey, his fourth son. Between the summers of 1392 and 1393 he undertook a journey to Prussia, and to the Holy Sepulchre.

The next year visited Henry with one of the most severe losses which can befall a youth of his age. His mother,^o then only twenty-four years old, having given birth to four sons and two daughters, was taken away from the anxious cares and comforts of her earthly career, in the very prime of life.^p Nor was this the only bereavement which befell the family at this time. Constance, the second wife of John of Gaunt, a lady to whose religious and moral worth the strongest and warmest testimony is borne by the chroniclers of the time; and who might (had it so pleased the Disposer of all things) have

vantes," being with the Earl, eight nobles; and to a certain English sailor, carrying the news of the birth of Humfrey, son of my lord, 13s. 4d.

^o King Richard II, the Duke of Lancaster, and his son, Henry of Bolinbroke, became widowers in the same year.

^p That Henry cherished the memory of his mother with filial tenderness, may be inferred from the circumstance that only two months after he succeeded to the throne, and had the means and the opportunity of testifying his grateful remembrance of her, we find money paid "in advance to William Goodyere for newly devising and making an image in likeness of the Mother of the present lord the King, ornamented with diverse arms of the kings of England, and placed over the tomb of the said king's mother, within the King's College at Leicester, where she is buried and entombed."—Pell Rolls, May 20, 1413.

watched over the education of her husband's grandchildren, was also this same year removed from them to her rest: they were both buried at Leicester, then one of the chief residences of the family.

The mind cannot contemplate the case of either of these ladies without feelings of pity rather than of envy. They were both nobly born, and nobly married; and yet the elder was joined to a man, who, to say the very least, shared his love for her with another; and the younger, though requiring, every year of her married state, all the attention and comfort and support of an affectionate husband, yet was more than once left to experience a temporary widowhood. And if we withdraw our thoughts from those of whom this family was then deprived, there is little to lessen our estimate of their loss, when we think of those whom they left behind. Henry's maternal grandmother, indeed, the Countess of Hereford, survived her daughter many years; and we are not without an intimation that she at least interested herself in her grandson's welfare. In his will, dated 1415, he bequeaths to Thomas, Bishop of Durham, "the missal and portophorium^a which we had of the gift of our dear grandmother, the Countess of Hereford."^r We

^a The portiphorium was a breviary, containing directions as to the services of the church.

^r He bequeaths also, in the same will, "to Joan, Countess of Hereford, our dear grandmother, a gold cyphus." This lady, however, died before Henry. In the Pell Rolls we find the payment of "442*l.* 17*s.* 5*d.* to Robert Darcy and others,

may fairly infer from this circumstance that Henry had at least one near relation both able and willing to guide him in the right way. How far opportunities were afforded her of exercising her maternal feelings towards him, cannot now be ascertained; and with the exception of this noble lady, there is no other to whom we can turn with entire satisfaction, when we contemplate the salutary effects either of precept or example in the case of Henry of Monmouth.

His father indeed was a gallant young knight, often distinguishing himself at jousts and tournaments;^s of an active, ardent and enterprising spirit; nor is any imputation against his moral character found recorded. But we have no ground for believing, that he devoted much of his time and thoughts to the education of his children.

Henry Beaufort, the natural son of John of Gaunt, a person of commanding talent, and of considerable attainments for that age, whilst there is no reason to believe him to have been that abandoned worldling whose eyes finally closed in black

executors of Joan de Bohun, late Countess of Hereford, on account of live and dead stock belonging to her, February 27, 1421."

^s Soon after Henry IV's accession, the Pell Rolls, May 8, 1401, record the payment of "10*l.* to Bertolf Vander Eure, who fenced with the present lord the King with the long sword, and was hurt in the neck by the said lord the King." The Chronicle of London for 1386 says "there were joustes at Smithfield. There bare him well Sir Harry of Derby, the Duke's son of Lancaster."

despair without a hope of Heaven, yet was not the individual to whose training a Christian parent would willingly intrust the education of his child. And in John of Gaunt[†] himself, little perhaps can be discovered either in principle, or judgment, or conduct, which his grandson could imitate with religious and moral profit. Thus we find Henry of Monmouth in his childhood labouring under many disadvantages. Still our knowledge of the domestic arrangements and private circumstances of his family is confessedly very limited; and it would be unwise to conclude that there were no mitigating causes in operation, nor any advantages to put as a counterpoise into the opposite scale. He may have been under the guidance and tuition of a good

[†] The Author would gladly have presented to the reader a different portrait of the religious and moral character of "Old John of Gaunt, time-honoured Lancaster;" but a careful examination of the testimony of his enemies and of his eulogists, as well as of the authentic documents of his own household, seems to leave no other alternative, short of the sacrifice of truth. Godwin, in his *Life of Chaucer*, has undertaken his defence, but on such unsound principles of morality as must be reprobated by every true lover of Religion and Virtue. The same domestic register of the Duchy which records the wages paid to the adulteress, and the duke's losses by gambling, proves (as many other family accounts would prove) that no fortune however princely can supply the unbounded demands of profligacy and dissipation. Even John of Gaunt, with his immense possessions, was driven to borrow money. This fact is accompanied in the record by the curious circumstance, that an order is given for the employment of three or four stout yeomen, because of the danger of the road, to guard the bearers of a loan made by the Earl of Arundel to the Duke, and sent from Shrewsbury to London.

Christian and well-informed man ; he may have been surrounded by companions whose acquaintance would be a blessing. But this is all conjecture ; and probably the question is now beyond the reach of any satisfactory solution.

With regard to the next step also in young Henry's progress towards manhood, we equally depend upon tradition for the views which we may be induced to take : still it is a tradition in which we shall probably acquiesce without great danger of error. He is said to have been sent to Oxford, and to have studied in "The Queen's College" under the tuition of Henry Beaufort, his paternal uncle, then Chancellor of the University. No document is known to exist among the archives of the College or of the University, which can throw any light on this point ; except that the fact has been established of Henry Beaufort having been admitted a member of Queen's College, and of his having been chancellor of the university only for the year 1398.

This extraordinary man was consecrated Bishop of Lincoln, July 14, 1398, as appears by the Episcopal Register of that See ; after which he did not reside in Oxford. If therefore Henry of Monmouth studied under him in that university, it must have been through the spring and summer of that year, the eleventh of his age. And on this we may rely as the most probable fact. Certainly in the old buildings of Queen's College, a chamber used to be pointed out by successive generations as Henry the

Fifth's. It stood over the gateway opposite to St. Edmund's Hall. A portrait of him in painted glass, commemorative of the circumstance, was seen in the window, with an inscription (as it should seem of comparatively recent date) in Latin :

To record the fact for ever.
 The Emperor of Britain,
 The Triumphant Lord of France,
 The Conqueror of his enemies and of himself,
 Henry V.
 Of this little chamber,
 Once the great Inhabitant.*

It may be observed that in the tender age of Henry involved in this supposition, there is nothing in the least calculated to throw a shade of improbability on this uniform tradition. Many in those days became members of the university at the time of life when they would now be sent to school.^v And possibly we shall be most right in supposing that Henry (though perhaps without himself being enrolled among the regular academics) lived with his uncle, then chancellor, and studied under his superintendence. There is nothing on record

* Fuller in his Church History, having informed us that Henry's chamber over the College gate was then inhabited by the historian's friend Thomas Barlow, adds "His picture remaineth there to this day in *brass*."

^v Those who were designed for the military profession were compelled to bear arms, and go to the field at the age of fifteen : consequently the little education they received was confined to their boyhood.

(hitherto discovered) in the slightest degree inconsistent with this view; whereas if we were inclined to adopt the representation of some (on what authority it does not appear) that Henry was sent to Oxford soon after his father ascended the throne, many and serious difficulties would present themselves. In the first place his uncle, who was legitimated only the year before, was prematurely made Bishop of Lincoln by the Pope, through the interest of John of Gaunt, in the year 1398, and never resided in Oxford afterwards. How old he was at his consecration, has not yet been satisfactorily established; conjecture would lead us to regard him as a few years only (perhaps ten or twelve) older than his nephew. Otterbourne tells us that he was made Bishop^w when yet a boy.

In the next place we can scarcely discover six months in Henry's life after his uncle's consecration, through which we can with equal probability suppose him to have passed his time in Oxford. It is next to certain that before the following October term, he had been removed into King Richard's palace, carefully watched (as we shall see hereafter); whilst in the spring of the following year, 1399, he was unquestionably obliged to accompany that monarch in his expedition to Ireland. Shortly after his return, in the autumn of that year, on his father's accession to the throne, he was created Prince of Wales; and through the following spring the probability is strong that his father was too anxiously

^w "Admodum parvo."

engaged in negotiating a marriage between him and a daughter of the French King, and too deeply interested in providing for him an adequate establishment in the metropolis, to take any measures for improving and cultivating his mind in the university. Independently of which we may be fully assured that had he become a student of the University of Oxford as Prince of Wales, it would not have been left to chance, to deliver his name down to after-ages: the archives of the University would have furnished direct and contemporary evidence of so remarkable a fact; and the College would have with pride enrolled him at the time among its members: as the boy of the Earl of Derby, or the Duke of Hereford, living with his uncle, there is nothing^x in the omission of his name inconsistent with our hypothesis. At all events, whatever evidence exists of Henry having resided under any circumstances in Oxford, fixes him there under the tuition of the future Cardinal; and that well-known personage is proved not to have resided there subsequently to his appointment to the see^y of Lincoln, in the summer of 1398.^z

^x On the 29th of the preceding September 1397, Richard II. "with the consent of the prelates, lords and commons in parliament assembled," created Bolinbroke, then Earl of Derby, Duke of Hereford, with a royal gift of forty marks by the year, to him and his heirs for ever. Pell Rolls. Pasc. 22 R. II. April 15.

^y The Lincoln register (for a copy of which the Author is indebted to the present Bishop) dates the commencement of the year of Henry Beaufort's consecration from July 14, 1398.

^z It is a curious fact, not generally known, that Henry IV.

What were Henry's studies in Oxford, whether, like Ingulphus some centuries before, he drank to his fill of "Aristotle's^a Philosophy and Cicero's Rhetoric," or whether his mind was chiefly directed

in the *first* year of his reign took possession of all the property of the Provost and Fellows of Queen's College (on the ground of mismanagement), and appointed the Chancellor, the Chief Justice, the Master of the Rolls, and others, guardians of the College. This is scarcely consistent with the supposition of his son being resident there at the time, or of his selecting that college for him afterwards.

^a The Author trusts to be pardoned, if he suffers these conjectures on Henry's studies in Oxford to tempt him to digress in this note further than the strict rules of unity might approve. They brought a lively image to his mind of the occupations and confessions of one of the earliest known sons of Alma Mater. Perhaps Ingulphus is the first upon record who, having laid the foundation of his learning at Westminster, proceeded for its further cultivation to Oxford. From the biographical sketch of his own life, we learn that he was born of English parents and a native of the fair city of London. Whilst a schoolboy at Westminster, he was so happy as to have interested in his behalf Egitha, daughter of Earl Godwin, and queen of Edward the Confessor. He describes his patroness as a lady of great beauty, well versed in literature, of most pure chastity and exalted moral feeling, together with pious humbleness of mind, tainted by no spot of her father's or her brother's barbarism, but mild and modest, honest and faithful, and the enemy of no human being. In confirmation of his estimate of her excellence, he quotes a Latin verse current in his day, not very complimentary to her sire: "As a thorn is the parent of the rose, so was Godwin of Egitha." I have often seen her (he continues) when I have been visiting my father in the palace. Many a time, as she met me on my return from school, would she examine me in my scholarship and verses; and turning with the most perfect familiarity from the solidity of grammar to the playfulness of logic, in which she was well

to the scholastic theology so prevalent in his day, it were fruitless to inquire. His uncle (as we have already intimated) seems to have been a person of some learning, an excellent man of business, and in the command of a ready eloquence. In establish-

skilled, when she had caught me and held me fast by some subtle chain, she would always direct her maid to give me three or four pieces of money, and sending me off to the royal refectory would dismiss me after my refreshment." It is possible that many of our fair countrywomen in the highest ranks now, are not aware that, more than eight hundred years ago, their fair and noble predecessors could play with a Westminster scholar in grammar, verses, and logic. Egitha left behind her an example of high religious, moral, and literary worth, by imitating which, not perhaps in its literal application, but certainly in its spirit, the noble born among us will best uphold and adorn their high station. Ingulphus (in the very front of whose work the Author thinks he sees the stamp of raciness and originality, though he cannot here enter into the question of its genuineness) tells us then, how he made proficiency beyond many of his equals in mastering the doctrines of Aristotle, and covered himself to the very ankles in Cicero's Rhetoric. But, alas, for the vanity of human nature! His confession here might well suggest reflections of practical wisdom to many a young man who may be tempted, as was Ingulphus, in the university or the wide world, to neglect and despise his father's roof and his father's person, after success in the world may have raised him in society above the humble station of his birth,—a station from which perhaps the very struggles and privations of that parent himself may have enabled him to emerge. "Growing up a young man (he says) I felt a sort of disdainful loathing at the straitened and lowly circumstances of my parents, and desired to leave my paternal hearth, hankering after the halls of kings and of the great, and daily longing more and more to array myself in the gayest and most luxurious costume." Ingulphus lived to repent, and to be ashamed of his weakness and folly.

ing his positions before the parliament, we find him not only quoting from the Bible, (often, it must be acknowledged, without any strict propriety of application,) but also citing facts from ancient Grecian history. We may, however, safely conclude that the Chancellor of Oxford confined himself to the general superintendence of his nephew's education, intrusting the details to others more competent to instruct him in the various branches of literature. It is very probable that to some arrangement of that kind Henry was indebted for his acquaintance with such excellent men as his friends John Carpenter of Oriel, and Thomas Rodman, or Rodburn, of Merton.^b

But whatever course of study was chalked out for

^b John Carpenter. This learned and good man could not have been much, if at all, Henry's senior. He was made Bishop of Worcester (not as Goodwin says by Henry V. but) in the year 1443. He died in 1476; so that if he was in Oxford when we suppose Henry to have studied there and to have been only his equal in age, he would have been nearly ninety when he died. Thomas Rodman was an eminent astronomer as well as a learned divine, of Merton College. He was not promoted to a bishopric till two years after Henry's death.

Among other learned and pious men who were much esteemed by Henry, we find especially mentioned Robert Mascall, confessor to his father, and Stephen Partington. The latter was a very popular preacher, whom some of the nobility invited to court. Henry, delighted with his eloquence, treated him with favour and affectionate regard, and advanced him to the see of St. David's. Robert Mascall was of the order of Friars Carmelites. In 1402 he was ordered to be continually

him, and through however long or short a period before the summer of 1398, or under what guides soever he pursued it, it is impossible to read his letters, and reflect on what is authentically recorded of him, without being involuntarily impressed by an assurance that he had imbibed a very considerable knowledge of Holy Scripture, even beyond the young men of his day. His conduct also in after-life would prepare us for the testimony borne to him by chroniclers, that "he held in great veneration such as surpassed in learning and virtue." Still, whilst we regret that history throws no fuller light on the early days of Henry of Monmouth, we cannot but hope that in the hidden treasures of manuscripts hereafter to be again brought into the light of day, much may be yet ascertained on satisfactory evidence; and we must leave the subject to those more favoured times.^c

But whilst doubts may still be thought to hang over the exact time and the duration of Henry's

about the King's person, for the advantage and health of his soul. Two years afterwards he was advanced to the see of Hereford. Pell Rolls.

^c Many ancient documents (of the existence of which in past years, often not very remote, there can be no doubt,) now, unhappily for those who would bring the truth to light, are in a state of abeyance or of perdition. To mention only one example; the work of Peter Basset, who was chamberlain to Henry V. and attended him in his wars, referred to by Goodwin, and reported to be in the library of the College of Arms, is no longer in existence; at least it has disappeared and not a trace of it can be found there.

academical pursuits, it is matter of historical certainty, that an event took place in the autumn of 1398, which turned the whole stream of his life into an entirely new channel, and led him by a very brief course to the inheritance of the throne of England. His father, hitherto known as the Earl of Derby, was created Duke of Hereford by King Richard II. Very shortly after his creation, he stated openly in parliament^d that the Duke of Norfolk, whilst they were riding together between Brentford and London, had assured him of the King's intention to get rid of them both, and also of the Duke of Lancaster with other noblemen, of whose designs against his throne or person he was apprehensive. The Duke of Norfolk denied the charge, and a trial of battle was appointed to decide the merits of the question. The King, doubting probably the effect on himself of the issue of that wager of battle, postponed the day from time to time. At length he fixed finally upon the 16th of September, and summoned the two noblemen to redeem their pledges at Coventry. Very splendid preparations had been made for the struggle; and the whole kingdom shewed the most anxious interest in the result. On the day appointed, the Lord High Constable and the Lord High Marshal of England, with a very great company, and splendidly arrayed, first entered the lists. About the hour of prime the Duke of Hereford appeared at the barriers on a white

^d Rot. Parl. 21 Rich. II. & Rot. Cart.

courser, barbed with blue and green velvet, sumptuously embroidered with swans and antelopes^e of goldsmith's work,^f and armed at all points. The King himself soon after entered with great pomp, attended by the peers of the realm, and above ten thousand men in arms to prevent any tumult. The Duke of Norfolk then came on a steed "barbed with crimson velvet embroidered with mulberry-trees and lions of silver." At the proclamation of the herald, Hereford sprang upon his horse, and advanced six or seven paces to meet his adversary. The king upon this suddenly threw down his warder, and commanded the spears to be taken from the combatants, and that they should resume their chairs of state. He then ordered proclamation to be made that the Duke of Hereford had honourably^g fulfilled his duty; and yet, without assigning any reason, he immediately sentenced him to be banished for ten years: at the same time he condemned the Duke of Norfolk to perpetual exile, adding also the confiscation of his property, except only one thousand pounds by the year. This act of tyranny

^e It is curious to find that when Henry V. met his intended bride Katharine of France, the tent prepared for him by her mother the Queen, was composed of blue and green velvet, and embroidered with the figures of antelopes.

^f The Duke of Hereford's armour was exceedingly costly and splendid. He had sent to Italy to procure it on purpose for that day; he spared no expense in its preparation; and it was forwarded to him by the Duke of Milan.

^g "Rex proclamari fecit quod Dux Herefordiæ debitum suum honorificè adimpleret."—Wals. 356.

towards Bolinbroke,^h contrary, as the chroniclers say, to the known laws and customs of the realm, as well as to the principles of common justice, led by direct consequence to the subversion of Richard's throne, and probably to his premature death.

Whilst however the people sympathized with the Duke of Hereford, and reproached the King for his rashness, as impolitic as it was iniquitous, they seemed to view in the sentence of the Duke of Norfolk, the visitation of divine justice avenging on his head the cruel murder of the Duke of Gloucester. It was remarked (says Walsingham) that the sentence was passed on him by Richard on the very same day of the year on which, only one twelvemonth before, he had caused that unhappy prince to be suffocated in Calais.

^h The "Chronicle of London" asserts that Richard sought and obtained from the Pope of Rome a confirmation of his statutes and ordinances made at this time.

CHAPTER II.

HENRY TAKEN INTO THE CARE OF RICHARD. — DEATH OF JOHN OF GAUNT. — HENRY KNIGHTED BY RICHARD IN IRELAND. — HIS PERSON AND MANNERS. — NEWS OF BOLINBROKE'S LANDING AND HOSTILE MEASURES REACHES IRELAND. — INDECISION AND DELAY OF RICHARD. — HE SHUTS UP HENRY AND THE YOUNG DUKE OF GLOUCESTER IN TRYM CASTLE. — REFLECTIONS ON THE FATE OF THESE TWO COUSINS — OF BOLINBROKE — RICHARD — AND THE WIDOWED DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER.

1398 — 1399.

THE first years of Henry of Monmouth fall, in part at least, as we have seen, within the province of conjecture rather than of authentic history : and the facts for reasonable conjecture to work upon are much more scanty with regard to this royal child, than we find to be the case with many persons far less renowned, and still further removed from our day. But from the date of his father's banishment, very few months in any one year elapse without supplying some clue, which enables us to trace him step by step through the whole career of his eventful life, to the very last day and hour of his mortal existence.

His father's exile dates from October 13, 1398, when Henry had just concluded his eleventh year.

Whether up to that time he had been living chiefly in his father's house, or with his grandfather John of Gaunt, or with his maternal grandmother, or with his uncle Henry Beaufort either at Oxford or elsewhere, we have no positive evidence. John of Gaunt did not die till the 3rd of the following February, and he would, doubtless, have taken his grandson under his especial care, at all events on his father's banishment, probably assigning Henry Beaufort to be his tutor and governor. But when Richard sentenced Henry of Bolinbroke, he was too sensible of his own injustice, and too much alive, in this instance at least, to his own danger, to suffer Henry of Monmouth to remain at large. One of the most ancient, and most widely adopted principles of tyranny, pronounces the man "to be a fool, who when he makes away with a father, leaves the son in power to avenge his parent's wrongs." Accordingly Richard took immediate possession of the persons both of the son of the murdered Duke of Gloucester, and of Henry of Monmouth, of whose relatives, as the chroniclers say, he had reason to be especially afraid.

John of Gaunt, we may conclude, now disabled as he was, by those infirmities^a which hastened him to the grave^b more rapidly than the mere pro-

^a See the Remains of Thomas Gascoyne, a contemporary writer. Brit. Mus. 2 I. d. p. 530.

^b John of Gaunt died on the 3rd of February 1399, at the house of the Bishop of Ely in Holborn. Will. Worc.

gress of calm decay, could exert no effectual means either of sheltering his son from the unjust tyrant who sentenced him to ten years banishment from his native land, or of rescuing his grandson from the close custody of the same oppressor. Still the very name of that renowned duke must have put some restraint upon his royal nephew. The lion had yet life, and might put forth one dying effort, if the oppression were carried past his endurance; and it might have been thought well to let him linger and slumber on, till nature should have struggled with him finally. We find, consequently, that though before Bolinbroke's departure from England Richard had remitted four years of his banishment, as a sort of peace-offering perhaps to John of Gaunt, no sooner was that formidable person dead, than Richard, throwing off all semblance of moderation, exiled Bolinbroke for life, and seized and confiscated his property.^c

^c Two candelabra which belonged to Henry Duke of Lancaster, were presented by Richard to the abbot and convent of Westminster, 30th June 1399.—Pell Rolls. He also granted to Catherine Swynford, the late duke's widow, some of the possessions which she had enjoyed before, but which had fallen into the king's hands by the confiscation of the present duke's property.—Pat. 22 Ric. II. Froissart expressly says, that Richard confiscated Bolinbroke's estates, and divided them among his own favourites. He acquaints us, moreover, with an act of cruel persecution and enmity on the part of Richard, which must have rendered Bolinbroke's exile far more galling, and have exasperated him far more bitterly against his persecutor. Richard, says Froissart, sent Lord Salisbury over to

Though Richard behaved towards Bolinbroke with such reckless injustice, he does not appear to have been forgetful of his wants during his exile. Within two months of the date of his banishment the Pell Rolls record payment (14 November 1398) "of a thousand marks to the Duke of Hereford, of the King's gift, for the aid and support of himself, and the supply of his wants, on his retirement from England to parts beyond the seas assigned for his sojourn." And on the 20th of the following June payment is recorded of "1586*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* part of the 2000*l.* which the king had granted to him, to be advanced annually at the usual times." But this was a poor compensation for the honours and princely possessions of the Dukedom of Lancaster, and the comforts of his home. No wonder if he were often found, as historians tell, in deep depression of spirits, whilst he thought of "his four brave boys, and two lovely daughters," now doubly orphans.

The plan of this work does not admit of any detailed enumeration of the exactions, nor of any minute inquiry into the violence and reckless tyranny of Richard. It cannot be doubted that a long series of oppressive measures at this time alienated the affections of many of his subjects, and

France on express purpose to break off the contemplated marriage between Bolinbroke and the daughter of the Duke of Berry, in the presence of the French court calling him a false and wicked traitor. Ed. 1574. Vol. iv. p. 290.

exposed his person and his throne to the attacks of proud and powerful, as well as injured and insulted enemies. His conduct appears to evince little short of infatuation. He was determined to act the part of a tyrant with a high hand, and he defied the consequences of his rashness. He had stopped his ears to sounds which must have warned him of dangers setting thick around him from every side ; and he had wilfully closed his eyes, and refused to look towards the precipice whither he was every day hastening.^d He rushed on, despising the danger, till he fell once, and for ever. The murder of the Duke of Gloucester, involving on the part of the king one of the most base and cold-hearted pieces of treachery ever recorded of any ruthless tyrant, had filled the whole realm with indignation ; and chroniclers do not hesitate to affirm that Richard would have been then deposed and destroyed, had it not been for the interposition of John of Gaunt ; and now the eldest son of that very man, who alone had sheltered him from his people's vengeance, Richard banishes for ever without cause, confiscating his princely estates, and pursuing him with bitter and insulting vengeance even in his exile.

^d The chroniclers give us an idea of expense in Richard both about his person, his houses, and his presents, which exceeds belief. Both the Monk of Evesham and the author of the Sloane Manuscript speak of a single robe which cost thirty thousand marks.

If his own reason had not warned him beforehand against such self-destroying acts of iniquity and violence, yet the signs of the popular feeling which followed them, would have recalled any but an infatuated man to a sense of the danger into which he was plunging. When Henry of Bolinbroke left London for his exile, forty thousand persons are said to have been in the streets lamenting his fate; and the mayor, accompanied by a large body of the higher class of citizens, attended him on his way as far as Dartford; and some never left him till they saw him embark at Dover.^e But to all these clear and strong indications of the tone and temper of his subjects, Richard was obstinately blind and deaf. If he heard and saw them, he hardened himself against the only practical influence which they were calculated to produce. Setting the approaching political storm, and every moral peril, at defiance, he quitted England just as though he were leaving behind him contented and devoted subjects.

Having assigned Wallingford Castle for the residence of his Queen Isabel, he departed for Ireland about the 18th of May; but did not set sail from Milford Haven till the 29th; he reached Waterford on the last day of the month. Though Richard^f

^e Froissart tells us that Bolinbroke was much beloved in London. He represents also his reception in France to have been most cordial; every city opening its gates to welcome him.—See Froissart, vol. iv. p. 280.

^f Froissart says that Richard sent expressly both to Nor-

was prompted solely by reasons of policy and by a regard to his own safety to take with him to Ireland Henry of Monmouth, (together with Humphrey, son of the murdered Duke of Gloucester,) we should do him great injustice were we to suppose that he treated him as an enemy.^g On the contrary, we have reason to believe that he behaved towards him with great kindness and respect.^h

About midsummer the king advanced towards the country and strong-holds of Macmore, his most formidable antagonist. On the opening of that campaign he conferred upon young Henry the order of knighthood;ⁱ and wishing to signalize this mark of the royal favour with unusual celebrity, he conferred on that day the same distinction (ex-

thumberland and Hotspur, requiring their attendance in his expedition to Ireland; that they both refused; and that he banished them the realm. Vol. iv. p. 295.

^g March 5, 1399, the Pell Rolls record the payment of "10*l.* to Henry, son of the Duke of Hereford, in part payment of 500*l.* yearly, which our present lord the King has granted to be paid him at the Exchequer during pleasure." Twenty pounds also were paid to him on the 21st of the preceding February.

^h Whether as a measure of security, or on a principle of kind considerateness for Henry of Monmouth, when Richard left England he took with him Henry Beaufort, (Pat. p. 3. 22 Ric. II, n. 11.): though it is curious to remark that when on his return to England he left Henry of Monmouth in Trym Castle, we find Henry Beaufort in the company of Richard.

ⁱ In 1379, his grandfather John of Gaunt required aid of his tenants towards making his eldest son, Henry of Bolinbroke, a knight.

pressly in honour of Henry) upon ten others his companions in arms. The particulars of this transaction, and the details of the entire campaign against the Wild Irish, as they were called, are recorded in a metrical history by a Frenchman named Creton, who was an eye-witness of the whole affair. This gentleman had accepted the invitation of a countryman of his own, a knight, to accompany him to England. On their arrival in London they found the king himself in the very act of starting for Ireland, and thither they went in his company as amateurs.

This writer thus describes^k the courteous act and pledge of friendship bestowed by Richard on his youthful companion and prisoner, recording, with some interesting circumstances, the very words of knightly and royal admonition with which the distinguished honour was conferred. "Early on a summer's morning, the vigil of St. John, the King marched directly to Macmore^l, who would neither

^k M. Creton's Metrical History is translated from a beautifully illuminated copy, in the British Museum, by the Rev. John Webb, who has enriched it with many valuable notes and dissertations, historical, biographical, &c. It forms part of the twentieth volume of the *Archæologia*. M. Creton confesses himself to have been thrown into a terrible panic on the approach of danger, more than once: and probably he was in higher esteem in the hall among the guests for his minstrelsy and song, than in the battle-field for his prowess.

^l The sons of this Irish chief, Macmore, or Macmorch, or Mac Murchard, were hostages in England, May 3, 1399.—Pell Rolls.

submit, nor obey him in any way, but affirmed that he was himself the rightful king of Ireland, and that he would never cease from war and the defence of his country till death. Then the King prepared to go into the depths of the deserts in search of him. For his abode is in the woods, where he is accustomed to dwell at all seasons; and he had with him, according to report, 3000 hardy men. Wilder people I never saw; they did not appear to be much dismayed at the English. The whole host were assembled at the entrance of the deep woods; and every one put himself right well in his array: for it was thought for the time that we should have battle; but I know that the Irish did not show themselves on this occasion. Orders were then given by the King that every thing around should be set fire to. Many a village and house were then consumed. While this was going on, the King, who bears leopards in his arms, caused a space to be cleared on all sides, and pennon and standards to be quickly hoisted. Afterwards, out of true and entire affection, he sent for the son of the Duke of Lancaster, a *fair young and handsome bachelor*,^m and knighted him, saying, ‘My fair cousin, henceforth be gallant and bold, for, unless you conquer, you will have little name for valour.’ And for his greater honour and satisfaction, to the end that it might be better imprinted on his me-

^m The term *bachelor* signified, in the language of chivalry, a young gentleman not yet knighted.

mory, he made eight or ten other knights; but indeed I do not know what their names were, for I took little heed about the matter, seeing that melancholy, uneasiness and care had formed, and altogether chosen my heart for their abode, and anxiety had dispossessed me of joy."

The English suffered much from hunger and fatigue during this expedition in search of the arch-rebel, and after many fruitless attempts to reduce him, reached Dublin, where all their sufferings were forgotten in the plenty and pleasures of that "good city."

The day on which Richard conferred upon Henry so distinguished a mark of his regard and friendship, offering the first occasion on which any reference is made to his personal appearance and bodily constitution, the present may, perhaps, be deemed an appropriate place for recording what we may have been able to glean in that department of biographical memoir with which few, probably, are inclined to dispense.

M. Creton, in his account of this memorable knighthood, represents Henry as "a handsome young bachelor," then in his twelfth year; and very little further, of a specific character, is recorded by his immediate contemporaries. The chroniclers next in succession describe him as a man of "a spare make, tall, and well-proportioned," "exceeding," says Stow, "the ordinary

stature of men;" beautiful of visage, his bones small: nevertheless he was of marvellous strength, pliant and passing swift of limb; and so trained was he to feats of agility by discipline and exercise, that with one or two of his lords he could, on foot, readily give chace to a deer without hounds, bow, or sling, and catch the fleetest of the herd. By the period of his early youth he must have outgrown the weakness and sickliness of his childhood, or he could never have endured the fatigues of body and mind to which he was exposed through his almost incessant campaigns from his fourteenth to his twentieth year. These hardships, nevertheless, may have been all the while sowing the seeds of that fatal disease which at the last carried him so prematurely from the labours, and vexations, and honours of this world.ⁿ

With regard to his habits of social intercourse, his powers of conversation, the disposition and bent

ⁿ Fuller, in his Church History, thus speaks of him, mingling with his description, however, the verification of the proverb, "An ill youth may make a good man," a maxim far less true (though far more popular) than one of at least equally remote origin, "Like sapling, like oak." He was "one of a strong and active body, neither shrinking in cold nor slothful in heat, going commonly with his head uncovered; the wearing of armour was no more cumbersome to him than a cloak. He never shrunk at a wound, nor turned away his nose for ill savour, nor closed his eyes for smoke or dust; in diet, none less dainty or more moderate; his sleep very short, but sound; fortunate in fight, and commendable in all his actions."

of his mind when he mingled with others, whether in the seasons of public business, or the more private hours of retirement and relaxation, (whilst the never-ending tales of his dissipation among his unthrifty reckless playmates are reserved for a separate inquiry,) a few words only will suffice in this place. In addition to the testimony of later authors, the records of contemporaneous antiquity, sometimes by direct allusion to him, sometimes incidentally and as it were undesignedly, lead us to infer that he was a distinguished example of affability and courteousness; still not usually a man of many words; clear in his own conception of the subject of conversation or debate, and ready in conveying it to others, yet peculiarly modest and unassuming in maintaining his opinion, listening with so natural an ease and deference, and kindness to the sentiments and remarks and arguments of others, as to draw into a close and warm personal attachment to himself those who had the happiness to be on terms of familiarity with him. Certainly the unanimous voice of Parliament ascribed to him, when engaged in the deeper and graver discussions involving the interests and welfare of the state, qualities corresponding in every particular with these representations of individual chroniclers. The glowing, living language of Shakspeare seems only to have recommended by becoming and graceful ornament, what had its existence really and substantially in truth.

Hear him but reason in divinity,
And, all-admiring, with an inward wish
You would desire the King were made a prelate :
Hear him debate of commonwealth affairs,
You would say, it hath been all-in-all his study :
List his discourse in war, and you shall hear
A fearful battle render'd you in music :
Turn him to any cause of policy,
The Gordian knot of it he will unloose,
Familiar as his garter ; that, when he speaks,
The air, a charter'd libertine, is still,
And the mute wonder lurketh in men's ears,
To steal his sweet and honey'd sentences.

Soon after Richard reached Dublin, the Duke of Albemarle, Constable of England, arrived with a large fleet, and with forces all ready for a campaign : but he came too late for any good purpose, and better had it been for Richard had he never come at all. His advice was the king's ruin. Richard with his army passed full six weeks in Dublin, in the free enjoyment of ease and pleasure, altogether ignorant of the terrible reverse which awaited him. In consequence of the uninterrupted prevalence of adverse winds, his self-indulgence was undisturbed by the news which the first change of weather was destined to bring. Through the whole of this momentous crisis the weather was so boisterous that no vessel dared to brave the tempest. On the return of a quiet sea, a barge arrived at Dublin upon a Saturday, laden with the appalling tidings that Henry, Duke of Lancaster, had returned from

exile and was carrying all before him; supported by Richard's most powerful subjects, now in open rebellion against his authority; and encouraged by the Archbishop, who in the Pope's name preached plenary absolution and a place in paradise to all who would assist the duke to recover his just rights from his unjust sovereign. The King grew pale at this news, and instantly resolved to return to England on the Monday following. But the Duke of Albemarle advised that unhappy monarch, fatally for his interests, to remain in Ireland till his whole navy could be gathered; and in the mean time^o to send over the Earl of Salisbury. That nobleman departed forthwith, (Richard solemnly promising to put to sea in six days,) and landed at Conway, "the strongest and fairest town in Wales."

Either before the Earl of Salisbury's departure, or as is the more probable, towards the last of those

^o M. Creton, the author of the Metrical History, acceded to the earnest request of the Earl of Salisbury to accompany him, for the sake of his minstrelsy and song. From the day of his departure from Dublin his knowledge of public affairs, as far as they are immediately connected with Henry of Monmouth, ceases almost, if not altogether. He must no longer be followed implicitly; whatever he relates of the intervening circumstances till Richard himself came to Conway, he must have derived from hearsay. In one circumstance too afterwards he must have been mistaken, when he says the Duke of Lancaster committed Richard at Chester to the safe keeping of *the son of the Duke of Gloucester* and the son of the Earl of Arundel, at least if Humfrey be the young man he means. Stow and others follow him here, but, as it should seem, unadvisedly.

eighteen days through which afterwards, to the ruin of his cause, Richard wasted his time (the only time left him) in Ireland, he sent for Henry of Monmouth, and upbraided him with his father's treason. Otterbourne minutely records the conversation which is said then to have passed between them. "Henry, my child," said the King, "see what your father has done to me. He has actually invaded my land as an enemy, and, as if in regular warfare, has taken captive and put to death my liege subjects without mercy and pity. Indeed, child, for you individually I am very sorry, because for this unhappy proceeding of your father you must perhaps be deprived of your inheritance." 'To whom Henry, though a boy, replied in no boyish manner,' "In truth, my gracious king and lord, I am sincerely grieved by these tidings; and, as I conceive, you are fully assured of my innocence in this proceeding of my father."—"I know," replied the King, "that the crime which your father has perpetrated does not attach at all to you; and therefore I hold you excused of it altogether."

Soon after this interview the unfortunate Richard set off from Dublin to return to his kingdom, which was now passing rapidly into other hands: but his two youthful captives, Henry of Monmouth, and Humfrey, son of the late Duke of Gloucester, he caused to be shut up in the safe keeping of the castle of Trym.^p From that day, which must have

^p The castle of Trym, though described by Walsingham as a

been somewhere about the 20th of August, till the following October,^a when he was created Prince of Wales in a full assembly of the nobles and commons of England, we have no direct mention made of Henry of Monmouth. That much of the intervening time was a season of doubt and anxiety and distress to him, we have every reason to believe. Though he had been previously detained as a hostage, yet he had been treated with great kindness; and Richard, probably inspiring him with feelings of confidence and attachment towards himself, had led him to forget his father's enemy and oppressor in his own personal benefactor and friend. Richard had now left him and his cousin (a youth doubly related to him) as prisoners in a solitary castle far from their friends, and in the custody of men at whose hands they could not anticipate what treatment they might receive. How long they remained in this state of close and, as they might well deem it, perilous confinement, we do not learn. Probably the Duke of Lancaster, on hearing of Richard's departure from Dublin, sent off immediately to release the two captive youths; or at the latest, as soon as he had the unhappy king within his power. On the

strong fort, was in so dilapidated a state, that, in 1402, the council, in taking the King's pleasure about its repairs, represent it as on the point of falling into ruins.

^a M. Creton expressly states that Henry IV. made Henry of Monmouth Prince of Wales on the day of his election to the throne, the first Wednesday in October; but in this he is not borne out by authority.

one hand it may be argued that had Henry of Monmouth joined his father before the cavalcade reached London, so remarkable a circumstance would have been noticed by the French author, who accompanied them the whole way. On the other hand we learn from the Pell Rolls that a ship was sent from Chester to conduct him to London, though the payment of a debt does not fix the date at which it was incurred.^r We may be assured no time was lost by the Duke, by those whom he employed, or by his son; at all events that Henry was restored to his father at Chester (a circumstance which would be implied had Richard there been consigned to the custody of young Humphrey), is not at all in evidence. The far more reasonable inference from what is recorded is, that Humphrey, his young fellow-prisoner and companion, and near relative and friend, was snatched from him by sudden death at the very time when Providence seemed to have opened to him a joyous return to liberty and to his widowed mother. There is no reason to doubt that the news of Richard's captivity, and the Duke of Lancaster's success, reached the two friends whilst prisoners in Trym Castle; nor that they were both

^r 1401, March 5, "To Henry Dryhurst of West Chester, payment for the freightage of a ship to Dublin: also for sailing to the same place and back again, to conduct the lord the Prince, the King's son, from Ireland to England; together with the furniture of a chapel and ornaments of the same, which belonged to King Richard."

released, and embarked together for England. Where they were when the hand of death separated them is not certainly known. The general tradition is, that poor Humphrey had no sooner left the Irish coast than he was seized by a fever, or by the plague, which carried him off before the ship could reach England. But whether he landed or not, whether he had joined the Duke or not before the fatal malady attacked him, there is no doubt that his death followed hard upon his release. His mother, the widowed duchess of his murdered father, who had moreover never been allowed the solace of her child's company, now bereft of husband and son, could bear up against her affliction no longer. On hearing of her desolate state, excessive grief overwhelmed her; and she fell sick and died.^s

It is impossible to contemplate these two youthful relatives setting out from the prison doors full of joy, and happy auguries, and mutual congratulations, in health and spirits, panting for their dearest friends,—one going to a principedom, and a throne, and a brilliant career of victories, the other to disease and death,—without being impressed with the wonderful acts of an inscrutable Providence,

^s Her death took place on the 3rd October 1399, four days after the accession of Henry IV. On the 6th of the preceding May the Pell Rolls record payment of the residue of 155*l.* 11*s.* 8*d.* to Alianore de Bohun, Duchess of Gloucester, for the maintenance of a master, twelve chaplains, and eight clerks, appointed to perform divine service in the College of Plecy.

with the ignorance and weakness of man, and with the resistless will of the merciful Ruler of man's destinies. Even had young Humphrey foreseen his dissolution, then so nigh at hand, as the gates of Trym Castle opened for their release, he might well have addressed his companion in words once used by the prince of Grecian philosophers at the close of his defence before the court who condemned him. "And now we are going, I indeed to death, you to life; to which of the two is the better fate assigned is known only to God!"^t

Since this page was first written, the Author has been led to examine the Pell Rolls;^u and he is induced to confess that, independently of the full confirmation afforded by those original documents to numberless facts referred to in these Memoirs, many an interesting train of thought is suggested by the inspection of them. The bare and dry entries of one single roll at the period now under consideration, bring with them to his mind associations of a truly affecting, serious, and solemn character. The very last roll of Richard II. by the merest details of expenditure records the payment of sums made by that unhappy monarch to Bolinbroke, then in exile, expatriated by his unjust and wanton decree; to Humphrey, the or-

^t Socrates, in his Defence before his Judges.

^u May 2nd & 6th, 1399, payments are recorded to both these boys of different sums to purchase dresses, and coat-armour, &c. preparatory to their voyage to Ireland in company with the King.

phan son of the late murdered Duke of Gloucester ; to Henry of Monmouth his cousin, both then in Richard's safe keeping ; and to Eleanor, the widowed mother of Humphrey, and maternal aunt of Henry. Can any event paint in deeper and stronger colouring the vicissitudes and reverses of mortality, " the changes and chances " of our life on earth ? Before the scribe had filled the next half-year's roll, (now lying with it side by side, and speaking like a monitor from the grave to high and low, rich and poor, prince and peasant alike,)—of those five persons, Richard had lost both his crown and his life ; Bolinbroke had mounted the throne from which Richard had fallen ; Henry of Monmouth had been created Prince of Wales ; and was hailed as heir apparent to that throne ; his cousin Humphrey, once the companion of his imprisonment, and the sharer of his anticipations of good or ill, had been carried off from this world by death at the very time of his release ; and the broken-hearted Eleanor, (the root and the branch of her happiness now gone for ever,) unable to bear up against her sorrows, had sunk under their weight into her grave ! *

* Perhaps the sentiments of this afflicted noble lady's will may be little more than words of course ; but, coming from her as they did a few days only before the news of her son's death paralyzed her whole frame, they appear peculiarly appropriate : " Observing and considering the mischances and uncertainties of this changeable and transitory world." The will bears date August 9, 1399.

CHAPTER III.

PROCEEDINGS OF BOLINBROKE FROM HIS INTERVIEW WITH ARCHBISHOP ARUNDEL, IN PARIS, TO HIS MAKING KING RICHARD HIS PRISONER. — CONDUCT OF RICHARD FROM THE NEWS OF BOLINBROKE'S LANDING. — TREACHERY OF NORTHUMBERLAND. — RICHARD TAKEN BY BOLINBROKE TO LONDON.

1398 — 1399.

WHETHER Henry of Monmouth met his father and the cavalcade at Chester, or joined them on their road to London, or followed them thither; whether he witnessed on the way the humiliation and melancholy of his friend, and the triumphant exaltation of his father, or not; every step taken by either of those two chieftains through the eventful weeks which intervened between King Richard making the youth a knight in the wilds of Ireland, and King Henry creating him Prince of Wales in the face of the nation at Westminster, bears immediately upon his destinies. And the whole complicated tissue of circumstances then in progress is so inseparably connected with him both individually and as the future monarch of England, that a brief review of the proceedings as well of the

falling as of the rising antagonist seems indispensable in this place.

Henry Bolinbroke (having now, by the death of John of Gaunt,^a succeeded to the dukedom of Lancaster,) found himself, during his exile, far from being the only victim of Richard's rash despotism; nor the only one determined to try, if necessary, and when occasion should offer, by strength of hand to recover their lost country, together with their property and their homes. Indeed, others

^a Froissart relates, in a very lively manner, how the English nobility amused themselves in devising the probable schemes by which Bolinbroke might dispose of himself during his exile. "He is young, said they, and he has already travelled enough, in Prussia, and to the Holy Sepulchre, and St. Katharine: he will now take other journeys to cheat the time. Go where he will, he will be at home; he has friends in every country."

The same author tells us that forty thousand persons accompanied him on his exile, not with music and song, but with sighs and tears and lamentations; and that on Gaunt's death the people of England "spoke much and loudly of Derby's return,—especially the Londoners, who loved him a hundred times more than they did the King. The Earl, he says, heard of the death of his father, even before the King of France, though Richard had posted off the event to that monarch as joyful tidings. He put himself and his household in deep mourning, and caused the funeral obsequies to be solemnized with much grandeur. The King, the Duke of Orleans, and very many nobles and prelates were present at the solemnity, for the Earl was much beloved by them all, and they deeply sympathized with his grief, for he was an agreeable knight, well-bred, courteous, and gentle to every one."

proved to have been far more forward in that bold measure than himself. Whilst he was in Paris^b, he received by the hands of Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, an invitation to return, and set up his standard in their native land. Arundel,^c himself one of Richard's victims, had been banished two years before the Duke, by a sentence which confiscated^d all his property. He made his way, we are told, to Valenciennes in the disguise of a pilgrim, and, proceeding to Paris, obtained an interview with

^b Froissart gives also a very animated description of the manner in which Bolinbroke was received by the King of France on his first arrival, and by the Dukes of Orleans, Brittany, Burgundy, and Bourbon. The meeting, he says, was joyous on both sides, and they entered Paris in brilliant array: but Henry was nevertheless very melancholy, being separated from his family,—four sons and two daughters.

The author translated by Laboureur, states that Richard no sooner heard of the welcome which Bolinbroke met with in France than he sent over a messenger, praying that court not to countenance his traitors. He adds, that as soon as Lancaster was dead, Richard regarded his written engagements with no greater scruple than he had before observed his promises by word of mouth.

^c Leland says that the Archbishop sojourned, during his exile, at Utrecht (Trajecti). Froissart is certainly mistaken in relating that the Londoners sent the Archbishop in a boat down the Thames with a message to Bolinbroke. It is very probable that they sent a messenger to the Archbishop, and through him communicated with their favourite.

^d Officers were appointed, 16th October 1397, to seize all lands of Thomas Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Duke of Gloucester, and other lords.—Pell Rolls. Pat. 1 Hen. IV. m. 8, the Archbishop's property is restored.

Henry ; whom he found at first less sanguine perhaps, and less ready for so desperate an undertaking, than he expected. The Duke for some time remained, apparently, absorbed in deep thought, as he leaned on a window overlooking a garden ; and at length replied that he would consult his friends. Their advice, seconding the appeal of the Archbishop, prevailed upon Henry to prepare for the hazardous enterprise ; in which success might indeed be rewarded with the crown of England, over and above the recovery of his own vast possessions, but in which defeat must lead inevitably to ruin. He left Paris for Brittany ; and sailing from one of its ports with three ships, having in his company only fifteen lances or knights, he made for the English coast.* About the 4th of July he came to shore at the

* Froissart, who seems to have obtained very correct information of Bolinbroke's proceedings up to the time of his embarking on the French coast for England, but from that hour to have been altogether misled as to his plans and circumstances, relates that he left Paris under colour of paying a visit to the Duke of Brittany ; that he went by the way of D'Estamps (one Guy de Baigneux acting as his guide) ; that he stayed at Blois eight days, where he received a most kind answer in reply to his message to the Duke, who gave him a cordial meeting at Nantes. The Duke promised him a supply of vessels and men to protect him in crossing the seas, and forwarded him with all kind sympathy from one of his ports : " and," continues Froissart, " I have heard that it was Vennes." It might have been, perhaps, during this visit that Henry formed, or renewed, an acquaintance with the Duchess, to whom, after the Duke's death, in 1402, he made an offer of his hand, and was accepted.

spot where of old time had stood the decayed town of Ravenspur. Landing boldly though with such a handful of men, he was soon joined by the Percies, and other powerful leaders; and so eagerly did the people flock to him as their deliverer from a headstrong reckless despot, that in a short time he numbered as his followers sixty thousand men, who had staked their property, their liberty, and their lives, on the same die. The most probable account of his proceedings up to his return to Chester, immediately before the unfortunate Richard fell into his hands, is the following, for which we are chiefly indebted to the translator of the "Metrical History."^f

The Duke of Lancaster's first measures, upon his landing, are not very accurately recorded by historians, nor do the accounts impress us with an opinion that they had arisen out of any digested plan of operation. But a comparison of the desultory information which is furnished relative to them, with what may fairly be supposed to be most advisable on his part, will, perhaps, show that they were the result of good calculation. The following is offered as the outline of the scheme. To secure to Henry a chance of success, it was in the first instance necessary, not only that the most powerful nobles remaining at home should join him, but that means should be devised for detaining the King in Ireland. It would be expedient to try the disposition of the people on the eastern coast, and that

^f See *Archæologia*, vol. xx. p. 61, note 'h.'

he should select a spot for his descent, from which he could immediately put himself in communication with his friends: Yorkshire afforded the greatest facility. The wind which took Albemarle over into Ireland must have been advantageous to Lancaster; and the tempestuous weather which succeeded must have been equally in his favour. He landed at Ravenspur, and marched to Doncaster, where the Percies and others came down to him. Knaresborough and Pontefract were his own by inheritance. Having thus gained a footing, he marched toward the south; and his opponents withdrew from before him.⁸ The council, consisting of the Regent, Scroop, Bussy, Green, and Bagot, could interpose no obstacle, and were driven by fear to Bristol. The Duke of York made some show of resistance. Perhaps the others intended to make for Milford, and thence to Ireland, or to await the King's arrival. Henry advanced to Leicester and Kenilworth, both his own castles; and went through Evesham to Gloucester and Berkeley. At Berkeley he came to an agreement with the Duke of York, secured many of Richard's adherents, passed on to Bristol, took the castle, slew three out of four of the unfortunate ministers, and gain-

⁸ Sir James Mackintosh seems to have been mistaken in supposing that Bolinbroke visited London on his first march southward. "His march from London against the few advisers of Richard, who had forfeited the hope of mercy, was a triumphant procession."

ed possession of a place entirely disaffected to the King. From Bristol he directed his course back to Gloucester, thence bearing westward to Ross and Hereford. Here he was joined by the Bishop and Lord Mortimer;^b and, passing through Leominster and Ludlow, he moved onward,ⁱ increasing his forces as he advanced towards Shrewsbury and Chester. In the mean time the plans of Albemarle (if we acknowledge the reality of his alleged treason) were equally successful. At all events Richard's course was most favourable for Henry. Had he gone from Dublin to Chester, he might have anticipated his enemy, and infused a spirit into his loyal subjects. But he came southward whilst Henry was going northward; and, about the time that Richard came on shore at Milford, Henry must have been at Chester, surrounded by his friends, at the head of an immense force, master of London, Bristol, and Chester, and of all the fortresses that had been his own, or had belonged to Richard, within a triangle, the apex of which is to be found in Bristol, the base extending from the mouth of the Humber to that of the Dee.

If in like manner we trace the steps of the misguided and infatuated Richard, treacherous at once and betrayed, from the hour when the news of

^b Monk of Evesham.

ⁱ He had many castles of his own in that part of the country, as Monmouth, Grosmont, Skenfrith, White Castle, &c.

Bolinbroke's hostile and successful measures reached him in Dublin to the day when he fell powerless into the hands of his enemy, we shall find much to reprehend; much to pity; little, perhaps nothing, which can excite the faintest shadow of respect. When the Earl of Salisbury left Ireland, Richard solemnly promised him that he would himself put to sea in six days; and the Earl, whose conduct is marked by devoted zeal and fidelity in the cause of his unfortunate master, acted upon that pledge. But whether misled by the treacherous suggestions of Albemarle, or following his own self-will or imbecility of judgment, Richard allowed eighteen days to pass away before he embarked, every hour of which was pregnant with most momentous consequences to himself and his throne. He landed at length at Milford Haven, and then had with him thirty-two thousand men; but in one night desertions reduced this body to six thousand. It is said that, on the morrow after his return, looking from his window on the field where his forces were encamped overnight, he was panic-struck by the smallness of the number that remained. After deliberation, he resolved on starting in the night for Conway, disguised in the garb of a poor priest of the Friars-Minor, and taking with him only thirteen or fourteen friends. He so planned his journey as to reach Conway at break of day, where he found the Earl of Salisbury no less dejected than himself. That faithful adherent had taken

effectual means, on his first arrival in Wales, to collect an army of Cambrians and Cheshiremen in sufficient strength, had the King joined them with his forces, to offer a formidable resistance to Bolinbroke. But, at the end of fourteen days, despairing of the King's arrival, they had disbanded themselves, and were scattered over the country, or returned to their own homes. On his clandestine departure also from Milford, the wreck of his army, who till then had remained true, were entirely dispersed: and his great treasure was plundered by the Welshmen, who are said to have been indignant at the treachery of those who were left in charge of it. Among many others, Sir Thomas Percy himself escaped naked and wounded to the Duke of Lancaster.

The page of history which records the proceedings of the two hostile parties, from the day of Richard's reaching Conway to the hour of his falling into the hands of Henry, presents in every line transactions stained with so much of falsehood and baseness, such revolting treachery and deceit, such wilful deliberate perjury, that we would gladly pass it over unread, or throw upon it the most cursory glance compatible with a bare knowledge of the facts. But whilst the desperate wickedness of the human heart is made to stand out through these transactions in most frightful colours, and whilst we shudder at the wanton prostitution of the most

solemn ordinances of the Gospel, there so painfully exemplified, the same page suggests to us topics of gratitude and of admonition,—gratitude that we live in an age when these shameless violations of moral and religious bonds would not be tolerated; and admonition that the principles of integrity and righteousness can alone exalt a people, or be consistent with sound policy. The truth of history here stamps the king, the nobleman, the prelate, and the more humble instruments of the deeds then done, with the indelible stain of dishonour and falsehood, and a reckless violation of law human and divine.

The King, believing his case to be desperate, implored his friends to advise him what course to adopt. At their suggestion he sent off the Dukes of Exeter and Surrey to remonstrate with Bolinbroke, and to ascertain his real designs. Meanwhile he retired with his little party of adherents, not more than sixteen in all, first to Beaumaris; then to Caernarvon, where he stayed four or five days, living on the most scanty supply of the coarsest food, and having nothing better to lie upon than a bed of straw. Though this was a very secure place for him to await the issue of the present course of events, yet, unable to endure such privations any longer, he returned to Conway. Henry, meanwhile, having reduced Holt Castle,^k and

^k Some think the castle then taken was Beeston.

possessed himself of an immense treasure deposited there by Richard, was bent on securing the person of that unhappy King. He consequently detained the two Dukes in Chester Castle ; and then, at the suggestion, it is said, of Arundel, sent off the Earl of Northumberland with an injunction not to return till either by truce or force he should bring back the King with him. The Duke, attended by one thousand archers and four hundred lances, advanced to Flint Castle, which forthwith surrendered to him. From Flint he proceeded along a toilsome road over mountains and rocks to Ruddlan, the gates of which were thrown open to him ; when he promised the aged castellan the enjoyment of his post there for life. Richard knew nothing of these proceedings, and wondered at the absence of his two noble messengers, who had started for Chester eight days before. Northumberland, meanwhile, having left his men concealed in ambush “under the rough and lofty cliffs of a rock,” proceeded with five or six only towards Conway. When he reached the arm¹ of the sea which washes the walls of that fortress, he sent over a herald, who immediately obtained permission for his approach. Northumberland, having reached the royal presence, proposed that the King should proceed with Bolinbroke amicably to London, and there hold a parliament, and suffer

¹ Over this estuary is now thrown a beautiful suspension-bridge, one of the ornaments of North Wales.

certain individuals named to be put on their trial. "I will swear," continued he, "on the body of our Lord, consecrated by a priest's hand, that Duke Henry shall faithfully observe all that I have said; for he solemnly pledged it to me on the sacrament when we parted." Northumberland then withdrew from the royal presence, when Richard thus immediately addressed his few counsellors: "Fair sirs, we will grant it to him, for I see no other way. But I swear to you that, whatever assurance I may give him, he shall be surely put to a bitter death; and, doubt it not, no parliament shall be held at Westminster. As soon as I have spoken with Henry, I will summon the men of Wales, and make head against him; and, if he and his friends be discomfited, they shall die: some of them I will flay alive." Richard had declared, before he left Ireland, that if he could but once get Henry into his power, he "would put him to death in such a manner as that it should be spoken of long enough, even in Turkey." Northumberland was then called in; and Richard assured him that, if he would swear upon the Host, he would himself keep the agreement. "Sire," said the Earl, "let the body of our Lord be consecrated. I will swear that there is no deceit in this affair; and that the Duke will observe the whole as you have heard me relate it here." Each of them heard mass with all outward devotion, and the Earl took the oath. Never was a contract made more solemnly, nor with a more fixed

purpose on both sides not to abide by its engagements: it is indeed a dark and painful page of history. Upon this pledge of faith, mutually given, the King readily agreed to start, sending the Earl on to prepare dinner at Ruddlan. No sooner had he reached the top of the rock than he beheld the Earl and his men below; and, being now made aware of the treachery by which he had fallen, he sank into despair, and had recourse only to unmanly lamentations. His company did not amount to more than five-and-twenty, and retreat was impossible. His remonstrance with the Earl as he charged him with perjury and treason availed nothing, and he was compelled to proceed. They dined at Ruddlan, and in the afternoon advanced to Flint Castle.^m Northumberland lost no time in apprising the Duke of the success of his enterprise. The messenger arrived at Chester by break of day; and the Duke set off with his army, consisting, it is said, of not less than one hundred thousand men. After mass, Richard beheld the Duke's army approaching along the sea-shore. "It was marvelously great, and showed such joy that the sound and noise of their instruments, horns, buisines, and trumpets, were heard even as far as the castle." The Duke sent forward the Archbishop, with two or three more, who approached the King with pro-

^m The author of the Metrical History has certainly made a mistake here. He says, Duke Henry started from Chester on Tuesday, August the 22nd; but in 1399 the 22nd day of August was on a Friday.

found reverence. In this interview, the first which the King had with Arundel since he banished him the realm and confiscated his property, they conversed long together, and alone. Whether any allusion was then made to the necessity of the King abdicating the throne, must remain matter of conjecture. The Archbishop (as the Earl of Salisbury reported) then comforted the King in a very gentle manner, bidding him not to be alarmed, for no harm should happen to his person.

The Duke did not enter the castle till Richard had dined, for he was fasting. At the table he protracted the repast as long as possible, dreading what would follow. Dinner ended, he came down to meet the Duke, who, as soon as he perceived him, bowed very low. The King took off his bonnet, and first addressed Bolinbroke. The French writer pledges himself to the words, for, as he says, he heard them distinctly, and understood them well. "Fair cousin of Lancaster, you be right welcome." Then Duke Henry replied, bowing very low to the ground, "My lord, I am come sooner than you sent for me; the reason whereof I will tell you. The common report of your people is, that you have for the space of twenty years and more governed them very badly and very rigorously; and they are not well contented therewith: but, if it please our Lord, I will help you to govern them better." King Richard answered, "Fair cousin, since it pleaseth you, it pleaseth me well."

Upon this Henry, when the time of departure was come, knowing that Richard was particularly fond of fine horses, is said to have called out with a stern and savage voice, "Bring out the King's horses;" and then *they brought him two little horses not worth forty francs*: the King mounted one, and the Earl of Salisbury the other. If this statement of the French author be accurate, Henry compelled his king to endure a studied mortification, as uncalled for as it was galling. Starting from Flint about two o'clock, they proceeded to Chester,ⁿ where the Duke was received with much reverence, whilst the unhappy monarch was exposed to the insults of the populace. He was immediately lodged in the castle with his few friends, and committed to the safe keeping^o of his enemies. In Chester they remained three days,^p and then set

ⁿ Great confusion and unnumbered deeds of injustice and cruelty prevailed through the kingdom between the landing of Bolinbroke and his accession to the throne; some of these outrages were, doubtless, of a political character, between the partisans of Richard and the Duke, many others the result of private revenge and rapine. To put a stop to these enormities, Richard was advised (perhaps the more meet expression would be 'compelled') to sign two proclamations, one dated Chester, August 20; the other Lichfield, August 24. In these he calls Bolinbroke his very dear relative.

^o The Metrical History says, Richard's keepers were the son of the Duke of Gloucester, and the son of the Earl of Arundel. The reasons for doubting this have been already assigned. Humphrey was probably at that time no longer numbered among the living.

^p The question naturally offers itself here, Might not this

out on the direct road for London. Their route lay through Nantwich, Newcastle-under-Line, Stafford, Lichfield, Daventry, Dunstable, and St. Alban's. Nothing worthy of notice occurred during the journey, excepting that at Lichfield the captive monarch endeavoured to escape at night, letting himself down into a garden from the window of a tower in which they kept him. He was however discovered, and from that time was watched most narrowly.

When they arrived within five or six miles of London, they were met by various companies of the citizens, who carried Richard first to Westminster, and next day to the Tower. Henry did not accompany him, but turned aside to enter the city by the chief gate. Proceeding along Cheapside to St. Paul's amidst the shouts of the people, he advanced in full armour to the high altar; and, having offered his devotions there, he turned to the tomb of his father and mother, at the sight of which he was deeply affected. He lodged the first five or six days in the Bishop's house; and, having passed another fortnight in the hospital of St. John without Smithfield, he went to Hertford, where he stayed three weeks. From that place he returned to meet the parliament, which was to assemble in Westminster Hall on Wednesday the first day of October.

delay have been occasioned by Lancaster's desire not to start before Henry of Monmouth had returned from Ireland, and joined him?

CHAPTER IV.

RICHARD RESIGNS THE CROWN. — BOLINBROKE ELECTED KING.
— HENRY OF MONMOUTH CREATED PRINCE OF WALES. —
PLOT TO MURDER THE KING. — DEATH OF RICHARD. —
— FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN HIM AND HENRY. — PROPOSALS
FOR A MARRIAGE BETWEEN HENRY AND ISABELLA, RICHARD'S
WIDOW. — HENRY APPLIES FOR AN ESTABLISHMENT. —
HOSTILE MOVEMENT OF THE SCOTS. — TRADITION, THAT
YOUNG HENRY MARCHED AGAINST THEM, DOUBTED.

1399 — 1400.

WHEN the Parliament assembled in Westminster Hall on Wednesday, October 1st, a deed of resignation of the crown, signed by the unhappy Richard, and witnessed by various noblemen, was publicly read. Whether, whilst a prisoner in the Tower, his own reflections on the present desperate state of his affairs had persuaded him to sever himself from the cares and dangers of a throne; whether he was prevailed upon to take this view of his interests and his duty by the honest and kind representations of his friends; or whether any degree of violence by threat and intimidation, and alarming suggestions of future evils had been applied, it would be fruitless to inquire. The instrument indeed itself is couched

in terms expressive of most voluntary and unqualified self-abasement, containing, among others, such expressions as these: "I do entirely, of my own accord, renounce and totally resign all kingly dignity and majesty; purely, voluntarily, simply, and absolutely." On the other hand, if we believe Hardyng,^a the Earl of Northumberland asserted in his hearing, that Richard was forced to resign under fear of death. Probably from his first interview with the Archbishop in Flint Castle, to the hour before he consented to execute the deed, his mind had been gradually and incessantly worked upon by various agents, and different means, short of actual violence, for the purpose of inducing him to make, ostensibly at least, a voluntary resignation. He seems more than once to have received both from Arundel and from Bolinbroke himself an assurance of personal safety; and he is said to have expressed a hope that "his cousin would be a kind lord to him."

The accounts which have reached us of the proceedings, from the hour when Richard entered the Tower, to the day of his death, are by no means

^a Hardyng's testimony must, on every subject, be received with much caution. Confessedly he was a sad example of a time-server; and was skilled in giving facts a different colouring, just as they would be the more welcome to those for whose inspection he was writing. His version of the same events, when presented to members of the house of York, varies much from the original work, edited when a Lancastrian was in the ascendant.

uniform and consistent. The discrepancies however of the various traditions neither involve any questions of great moment, nor deeply affect the characters of those who were engaged in the transactions. Of one point indeed we must make an exception, the cause and circumstances of Richard's death; which, whether we look to Henry of Monmouth's previous attachment to him, and the respect which he industriously and cordially showed to the royal remains immediately upon his becoming king himself; or whether we reflect on the vast consequence, affecting Bolinbroke's character, involved in the solution of that much-agitated question, may seem not only to justify, but to call for, a distinct examination in these pages. The broad facts, meanwhile, relative to the deposition of Richard and the accession of Henry, are clear and indisputable; whilst some minor details, which have excited discussions carried on in the spirit rather of angry contention than of the simple love of truth, and which do not bear immediately upon the objects of this work, may well be omitted altogether.

After Richard had signed the deed of resignation, the steps were few and easy which brought Henry of Bolinbroke to the throne. The Parliament, either by acquiescence in his demand of the crown, or in answer to the questions put by the Archbishop, elected Henry IV. to be king, and denounced all as traitors who should gainsay his

election or dispute his right.^b He was crowned on the Feast of St. Edward, Monday, October 13, when his eldest son, Henry of Monmouth, bore the principal sword of state; who, on the Wednesday following, by assent of all the Estates of Parliament, was created Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall, and Earl of Chester, and declared also to be heir to the throne.^c On this occasion his father caused him to be brought into his presence as he sate upon the throne; and placing a gold coronet, adorned with pearls, on his head, and a ring on his finger, and delivering into his hand a golden rod, kissed him and blessed him. Upon which the Duke of York conducted him to the place assigned to him in right of his principality. The Estates swore "the same faith, loyalty, aid, assistance, and fealty" to the Prince, as they had sworn to his father. Much interest seems to have been excited by this creation of Henry of Monmouth as Prince of Wales. On the 3rd of November the "Com-

^b M. Creton says (and in this he is followed by others) that the King, on the very day of his accession, created his eldest son Prince of Wales, who in that character stood on the right hand of the King at the coronation, holding in his hand a sword without any point, the emblem of peace and mercy. But in this he seems to have been partially mistaken. Henry was not created Prince of Wales till after his father's coronation, and he bore in right of the Duchy of Lancaster, and by command of the King, the blunted sword called Curtana, which belonged to Edward the Confessor.—Rot. Serv.

^c In the same Parliament he was invested also with the titles of Duke of Aquitaine and Duke of Lancaster.

mons pray that they may be entered on the record at the election of the Prince." Their petition can scarcely be interpreted as betraying a jealousy of the King's^d right to create a Prince of Wales independently of themselves; we must suppose it to have originated in a desire to be recorded as parties to an act so popular and national. At all events, in the then transition-state of the royal authority, it was wise to combine the suffrages of all: and the prayer of the Commons was granted. Another petition, presented on the same day, acquaints us with the lively interest taken from the very first by the nation at large in the safety and welfare of their young Prince. They pray the King, "for-as-much as the Prince is of tender age, that he may not pass forth from this realm: for we, the Commons, are informed that the Scots are coming with a mighty hand; and they of Ireland are purposed to elect a king among them, and disdain to hold of you." This lively interest evinced thus early, and in so remarkable a manner, by the Commons, in the safety and well-being of Henry of Monmouth, seems never to have slackened at any single period of his life, but to have grown still warmer and wider to the very close of his career on earth. After the date of his creation as Prince of Wales, history records but few facts relating to him, either in his

^d The Parliament had no voice in the creation of a dignity. The Lords and Commons were consulted on this occasion only out of courtesy by the King.

private or in his public capacity, till we find him personally engaged in suppressing the Welsh rebellion ; a point of time, however, far less removed from the commencement of his principedom than seems to have been generally assumed. In the same month, (November 1399,) a negociation was set on foot, with the view of bringing about a marriage between the Prince and one of the daughters of the King of France. Since, however, he apparently took no part whatever in the affair, the whole being a state-device to avoid the restoration to France of Isabella's valuable paraphernalia ; and since the proposals of the treaty were for the marriage of a daughter of France with the Prince, or *any other of the King's children* ; we need not dwell on a proceeding which reflects no great credit on his father, or his father's counsellors.^e Not that the vague offers of the negociation stamp the negociators with any especial disgrace. We cannot read many pages of history without being apprised, sometimes by painful instances, sometimes by circumstances rather ludicrous than grave, that marriages were regarded as subjects of fair and honourable negociation ; but requiring no greater delicacy than nations would observe in bargaining for a line

^e The proposal, of which Froissart has left a graphic description, that Isabella, the widow (if that be the proper designation of the child who was the espoused wife) of Richard II, should remain in England and be married to the Prince of Wales, was not made till after Richard's death.

of territory, or individuals in the purchase and sale of an estate. The negotiation, however, though the Bishop of Durham and the Earl of Worcester, both able diplomatists, were employed on the part of England, was eventually broken off; and Isabella was reluctantly and tardily restored to France.

About the close of the present year, or the commencement of the following (1400), the Prince makes a direct appeal to the council,^f that they would forthwith fulfil the expressed desire of his royal father with reference to his princely state and condition in all points. He requires them first of all to determine upon his place of residence, and the sources of his income; and then to take especial care that the King's officers, each in his own department and post of duty, should fully and perfectly put into execution whatever orders the council might give. "You are requested (says the memorial) to consider how my lord the Prince is utterly destitute of every kind of appointment relative to his household." The enumeration of his wants specified in detail is somewhat curious: "that is to say, his chapels,^g chambers, halls, wardrobe,

^f Minutes of Privy Council, vol. ii. p. 42.

^g "Ses chapelles." Under this word were included not only the place of prayer, but the books, and vestments, and furniture, together with the priests, and whatever else was necessary for divine worship. Indeed, the word has often a still wider signification. We shall see hereafter that Henry was always attended by his chapel during his campaigns in France.

pantry, buttery, kitchen, scullery, saucery, almonry, anointry, and generally all things requisite for his establishment."

It has been already intimated in the Preface, that an examination would be instituted in the course of this work into the correspondence of Shakspeare's representations of Henry's character and conduct with the real facts of history, and we will not here anticipate that inquiry. Only it may be necessary to observe, as we pass on, that the period of his life when the poet first describes him to be revelling in the deepest and foulest sinks of riot and profligacy, as nearly as possible corresponds with the date of this petition to the council to supply him with a home.

It was in the very first week of the year 1400 that Henry IV. discovered the treasonable plot, laid by the Lords Salisbury, Huntingdon, and others, to assassinate him during some solemn justs intended to be held at Oxford, professedly in honour of his accession. The King was then at Windsor; and, immediately on receiving information of the conspiracy, he returned secretly, but with all speed, to London.^h The defeat of these treasonable de-

^h Some chroniclers say, that the conspiracy was made known to the Mayor of London, who forthwith hastened to the King at Windsor, and urged him to save himself and his children. The same pages tell us that John Holland Earl of Huntingdon was seized and beheaded in Essex by the Dowager Countess of Hereford.—Sloane MS.

signs, and the execution of the conspirators, are matter of general history; and, as the name of the Prince does not occur even incidentally in any accounts of the transaction, we need not dwell upon it. Probably he was then living with his father under the superintendence of Henry Beaufort, now Bishop of Winchester, from whom indeed up to this time he seems to have been much less separated than from his parent. We have already seen that, whether for the benefit of the "young bachelor," or, with an eye to his own security, unwilling to leave so able an enemy behind, King Richard, when he took the boy Henry with him to Ireland, caused his uncle and tutor (Henry Beaufort) to accompany him also.ⁱ The probability also has been shown to approach demonstration that his residence in Oxford could not have taken place at this time; but that it preceded his father's banishment, rather than followed his accession to the throne. Be this as it may, history (as far as it appears) makes no direct mention of the young Prince Henry through the spring of 1400.

Soon, however, after the conspiracy against his father's life had been detected and frustrated, an event took place, already alluded to, which must have filled the warm and affectionate heart of Henry with feelings of sorrow and distress,—the premature death of Richard. That Henry had formed a sincere attachment for Richard, and long

ⁱ Pat. p. 3, 22 Ric. II.

cherished his memory with gratitude for personal kindness, is unquestionable; and doubtless it must have been a source of anxiety and vexation to him that his father was accused in direct terms of having procured the death of the deposed monarch. He probably was convinced that the charge was an ungrounded calumny; yet, with his generous indignation roused by the charge of so foul a crime, he must have mingled feelings of increased regret at the miserable termination of his friend's life.

The name of Henry of Monmouth has never been associated with Richard's except under circumstances which reflect credit on his own character. The bitterest enemies of his house, who scrupled not to charge Henry IV. with the wilful murder of his prisoner, have never sought to implicate his son in the same guilt in the most remote degree, or even by the gentlest whisper of insinuation. Whether Richard died in consequence of any foul act at the hand of an enemy, or by the fatal workings of a harassed mind and broken heart, or by self-imposed abstinence from food, (for to every one of these, as well as to other causes, has his death been severally attributed,) is a question probably now beyond the reach of successful inquiry. The whole subject has been examined by many able and, doubtless, unprejudiced persons; but their verdicts are far from being in accordance with each other. The general (though, as it should now seem, the mistaken) opinion appears to be, that after

Richard had been removed from the Tower to Leeds Castle, and thence to other places of safe custody, and had finally been lodged in Pontefract,^j the partisans of Henry IV. hastened his death. The Archbishop of York directly charged the King with the foul crime of murder, which he as positively and indignantly denied.^k The minutes of the Privy Council have not been sufficiently noticed by former writers on this event; and the reflections of the Editor,^l in his Preface, are so sensible and so immediately to the point, that we may be contented in these pages to do little more than record his sentiments.^m

^j The Pell Rolls contain several interesting entries connected with this subject. Payment for a thousand masses to be said for the soul of Richard, "whose body is buried in Langley." (20th March, 1400.) Payment also for carrying the body from Pomfret to London, &c.

^k See Henry's answer to the Duke of Orleans, as recorded by Monstrellet, in which he solemnly appeals to God for the vindication of the truth.

^l Sir Harris Nicolas. "Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council of England."

^m Mr. Tytler, in his History of Scotland, maintains with much ingenuity the paradoxical position, that Richard escaped from Pontefract, made his way in disguise to the Western Isles, was there recognised, and was conducted to the Regent; that, taken into the safe keeping of the government, and sick of the world and its disappointments, he lived for many years in Stirling Castle; and that he there died, and there was buried. It falls not within the province of these Memoirs to examine the facts and reasonings by which that writer supports his theory, or to weigh the value of the objections which have been alleged against it. The Author, however, in confessing that the result of his own inquiries is opposed to the hypothesis of Richard's escape, and that he

“Shortly after the attempt of the Earls of Kent, Salisbury, and Huntingdon to restore Richard to the throne, a great council was held for the consideration of many important matters. The first point was ‘that if Richard the late king be alive,

acquiesces in the general tradition that he died in Pontefract; cannot refrain from making one remark. Whilst he is persuaded that Glyndowr, and many others, believed that Richard was alive in Scotland, yet he thinks it almost capable of demonstration that Henry IV, with his sons and his court, in England; and Charles VI, with his court and clergy, and Isabella herself, and her second husband, had no doubt whatever as to Richard’s death. If they had, if they were not fully assured that he was no longer among the living, it is difficult to understand Henry IV.’s proposals to Charles VI. for a marriage between Isabella and one of his sons; or how, on any other hypothesis than the conviction of his death, the Earl of Angouleme, afterwards Duke of Orleans, would have sought her in marriage; how her father and his clergy could have consented to her nuptials; or how she could for a moment have entertained the thought of becoming a bride again. She had not only been betrothed to Richard, but had been with all solemnity married to him by the Archbishop of Canterbury in the face of the church; and she had been crowned queen. Yet she was married to Angouleme in 1406, and died in childbed in 1409. Had she believed Richard to be still alive, she would have been more inclined to follow the bidding which Shakspeare puts into her husband’s mouth at their last farewell, than to have given her hand before the altar to another:

“Hie thee to France,
And cloister thee in some religious house.”

Froissart says expressly that the French resolved to wage war with the English as long as they knew Richard to be alive; but when certain news of his death reached them, they were bent on the restoration of Isabella.

as some suppose he is, it be ordained that he be well and securely guarded for the salvation of the state of the King and of his kingdom.' On which subject the council resolved, that it was necessary to speak to the King, that, in case Richard the late king be still living, he be placed in security agreeably to the law of the realm; but if he be dead, then that he be openly showed to the people, that they may have knowledge thereof.' These minutes (observes Sir Harris Nicolas) appear to exonerate Henryⁿ from the generally received charge of having sent Sir Piers Exton to Pontefract for the purpose of murdering his prisoner. Had such been the fact, it is impossible to believe that one of Henry's ministers would have gone through the farce of submitting the above question to the council; or that the council would, with still greater absurdity, have deliberated on the subject, and gravely expressed the opinion which they offered to the King. A corpse, which was said to be that of Richard, was publicly exhibited at St. Paul's by Henry's direction, and he has been accused of substituting the body of some other person; but these minutes prove that the idea of such an exposure came from the council, and, at the moment when it was suggested, they actually did not know whether Richard was dead or alive, because they provided for either contingency.

ⁿ It is painful to hear the Church historian, without any qualifying expression of doubt or hope, call Henry IV. "the murderer of Richard."—Milner, cent. xv.

It is also demonstrated by them that, so far from any violence or ill-treatment being meditated in case he were living, the council merely recommended that he should be placed in such security as might be approved by the peers of the realm.^o It must be observed that this new piece of evidence, coupled with the fact that a corpse said to be the body of Richard was exhibited shortly after the meeting of the council, strongly supports the belief that he died about the 14th of February 1400, and that Henry and his council were innocent of having by unfair means produced or accelerated his decease."

Such we may hope to have been the case: at all events, the purpose of this work does not admit of any fuller investigation of the points at issue. If Henry were accessory to Richard's death, (to use an expression quoted as that unhappy king's own words,) ^p "it would be a reproach to him for ever, so long as the world shall endure, or the deep ocean be able to cast up tide or wave." It is, however, satisfactory to find in these authentic documents evidence which seems to justify us in adopting no other alternative than to return for Bolinbroke a verdict of "Not guilty." The corpse^q of Richard was carried through the city of London to St. Paul's with much of religious ceremony and solemn pomp,

^o Froissart expressly says, that, though often urged to it, Henry would never consent to have Richard put to death.

^p See *Archæologia*, xx. 290.

^q M. Creton.

Henry himself as King bearing the pall, "followed by all those of his blood in fair array." After it had been inspected by multitudes, (Froissart^r says by more than twenty thousand,) it was buried at Langley, where Richard had built a Dominican convent. Henry V, soon after his accession, removed the corpse to Westminster Abbey, and laid it by the side of Ann, Richard's former queen, in the tomb which he had prepared for her and himself.^s

Henry IV. had no sooner gained the throne of England, than he was made to feel that he could retain possession of it only by unremitting watch-

^r Froissart asserts that the corpse was exposed in the street of Cheap to public inspection for two hours, at the least.

^s A manuscript in the French King's library (No. 8448) states that Sir Piers d'Exton and seven other assassins entered the room to kill him; but that Richard, pushing down the table, darted into the midst of them, and, snatching a battle-axe from one, laid four of them dead at his feet, when Exton felled him with a blow at the back of his head, and, as he was crying to God for mercy, with another blow despatched him. This account is supposed to be entirely disproved by the fact that, when Richard's tomb was accidentally laid open a few years ago in Westminster Abbey, the head was carefully examined, and no marks of violence whatever appeared on it. (See *Archæologia*, vol. vi. p. 316, and vol. xx. p. 284.) On the other hand, it is equally obvious to remark, that, if Henry IV. did exhibit to the people the body of another person for that of Richard, it was the substituted body which was buried, first at Langley and afterwards at Westminster. The absence, consequently, of all marks of violence on that body, till its identity with the corpse of Richard is established, proves nothing. But surely there is no reason to believe that any deception was practised. There could have been no motive

fulness, and by a vigorous overthrow of each successive design of his enemies as it arose. In addition as well to the hostility of France (whose monarch and people were grievously incensed by the deposition of Richard), as to the restless warfare of the Scots, he was compelled to provide against the more secret and more dangerous machinations of his own subjects.^t After the discovery and defeat of the plot laid by the malcontent lords in the beginning of January (1400), he first employed himself in making preparations to repress the

for such fraud, and the strongest reasons must have existed to dissuade Henry from adopting it. The only object wished to be secured by the exposure of Richard's corpse, (and it was exposed at all the chief places between Pontefract and London,—at night after the offices for the dead, in the morning after mass,) was the removal of all doubt as to his being really dead. The false rumours were, not that he was murdered, but that he was alive. Among the thousands who flocked to see him were doubtless numbers of his friends and wellwishers, familiarly acquainted with his features, many of whom, it is thought, must have detected any imposture, and some of whom would surely have been bold enough to publish it. Still, on the other hand, it is suggested that a very short lapse of time after dissolution effects so material a change in a corpse, that the most intimate of a man's friends would often not be able to recognise a single feature in his countenance. And certainly many of Richard's friends remained unconvinced.

^t Chroniclers give an account of an extraordinary instrument of death laid in Henry's bed by some secret plotter against his life. The Sloane Manuscript describes it as a machine like the engine called the Caltrappe; and the Monk of Evesham says that it was reported to have been laid for Henry by one of Isabella's household.

threatened aggressions of his northern neighbours. His council had received news as early as the 9th of February of the intention of the Scots to invade England; indeed, as far back as the preceding November, the petition of the Commons informs us that they considered war with Scotland inevitable. On this campaign Henry IV. resolved to enter in his own person, and he left London for the North in the June following. Our later historians seem not to have entertained any doubts as to the accuracy of some early chroniclers, when they state that Henry of Monmouth was sent on towards Scotland as his father's representative, in command of the advanced guard, in the opening of the summer^a of 1400. Elmham states the general fact that Henry was sent on with the first troops, but in the manuscript there is a "Quære" in the margin in the same hand-writing. And the querist seems to have had sufficient reasons for expressing his doubts as to the accuracy of such a statement. The renown of the Prince as a youthful warrior will easily account for any premature date assigned to his earliest campaign; whilst the age of his father, who was seen at the head of the invading army in Scotland, might perhaps have contributed to a mistake. The King himself, at that time personally little known among his subjects, was not

^a Modern writers have erroneously referred to this year Monstrelet's account of Henry of Monmouth's expedition to Scotland.

more than thirty-four years old.* Be this as it may, we have great reason to believe that Henry IV, when he proceeded northward, left the Prince of Wales at home. In the first place, we must remember that, among their primary and most solemn acts after the King's coronation, the Commons, anticipating the certainty of this expedition into Scotland, preferred to him a petition, praying that the Prince by reason of his tender age might not go thither, "nor elsewhere forth of the realm." The letter too of Lord Grey of Ruthyn, to which we must hereafter refer, announcing the turbulent state of Wales, and the necessity of suppressing its disorders with a stronger hand, can best be explained on the supposition that the King was absent at the date of that letter,^y about Midsummer 1400, and that the Prince was at home. Lord Grey addresses his letter to the Prince, and not to the King; though the King, as well as the Prince, had commissioned him to put down the rising disturbances in his neighbourhood.^z Some, perhaps, may think this intelligible on the ground that Lord Grey wrote to Henry as Prince

* A curious item in the Pell Rolls (14 December 1401) intimates that Henry IV. amused himself with the sports of the field, and at the same time tells us that such amusements were by no means unexpensive in those days: "Sixteen pounds paid by the King to Sir Thomas Erpyngham as the price of a sparrow-hawk."

^y June 14, he wrote to his council from Clipstone in Nottinghamshire: July 4th, he was at York.—Min. Council.

^z "By our liege Lord his commandment, and by yours."

of Wales, and therefore more immediately intrusted with the preservation of its peace. But his suggestion to the Prince to take the advice of the King's council,—“with advice of our liege lord his council,”—is scarcely consistent with the idea of the King himself being at hand to give the necessary directions and a “more plainer commission.”

Be this however as it may: whether Henry of Monmouth's noviciate in arms was passed on the Scotch borders, (for in Ireland, as the companion of Richard, he had been merely a spectator,) or whether, as the evidence seems to preponderate, we consider the chroniclers to have antedated his first campaign, he was not allowed to remain long without being personally engaged in a struggle of far greater magnitude in itself, and of vastly more importance to the whole realm of England, than any one could possibly infer from the brief and cursory references made to it by the historians who are the most generally consulted by our countrymen. The rebellion of Owyn Glyndowr^a is des-

^a The name of this extraordinary man is very variously spelt. His christian name is either Owyain, or Owen, or Owyn. On his surname the original documents, as well as subsequent writers, ring many changes: the etymology of the name is undoubtedly The Glen of the waters of the Dee, or, Of the black waters. The name consequently is sometimes spelt Glyndwffrduy, and Glyndwrdu. In general, however, it assumes the form in English documents of Glendor, or Glyndowr: in Henry of Monmouth's first letter it is Oweyn de Glyndourdy. In these

patched by Hume in less than two octavo pages, though it once certainly struck a panic into the very heart of England, and through the whole of Henry IV.'s reign, more or less, involved a considerable portion of the kingdom in great alarm ; carrying devastation far and wide through some of its fairest provinces ; and at one period of the struggle, by the succour of Henry's foreign and domestic enemies, with whom the Welsh made common cause, threatening to wrest the sceptre itself from the hands of that monarch. The part which his son Henry of Monmouth was destined to take personally in resisting the progress of this rebellion, and the evidence which the indisputable facts recorded of that protracted contest bear to his character, (facts, most of which are comparatively little known, and many of which are altogether new in history,) seem to require at our hands a somewhat fuller investigation into the origin, progress, and circumstances of this rebellion, than has hitherto been undertaken by our chroniclers.

Memoirs the form generally adhered to is Owyn Glyndowr. In the record of the Scrope and Grosvenor controversy, Owyn's name is spelt Glendore, whilst his brother Tudor's, who was examined the same day, is written Glyndore.

CHAPTER V.

THE WELSH REBELLION. — OWYN GLYNDOWR. — HIS FORMER LIFE. — DISPUTE WITH LORD GREY OF RUTHYN. — THAT LORD'S LETTER TO PRINCE HENRY. — HOTSPUR. — HIS TESTIMONY TO HENRY'S PRESENCE IN WALES, — TO HIS MERCY AND HIS PROWESS. — HENRY'S DESPATCH TO THE PRIVY COUNCIL.

1400 — 1401.

PREVIOUSLY to the accession of Henry IV, Wales had enjoyed, for nearly seventy years, a season of comparative security and rest. During the desperate struggles in the reign of Henry III, in which its inhabitants, chiefly under their Prince Llewelin, fought so resolutely for their freedom, many districts of the Principality, especially the border-lands, had been rendered all but deserts. From this melancholy devastation they had scarcely recovered, when Queen Isabella, wife of Edward II, headed the rebel army against her own husband, who had taken refuge in Glamorganshire ; and carried with her the most dreadful of all national scourges, — a sanguinary civil war. The whole country of South Wales, we are told, was so

miserably ravaged by these intestine horrors, and the dearth consequent upon them was so excessive, that horses and dogs became at last the ordinary food of the miserable survivors. From the accession of Edward III, and throughout his long reign, Wales seems to have enjoyed undisturbed tranquillity and repose. Its oppressors were improving their fortunes, rapidly and largely, in France, reaping a far more abundant harvest in her rich domains than this impoverished land could have offered to their expectations. Through the whole reign also of Richard II, we hear of no serious calamity having befallen these ancient possessors of Britain. A friendly intercourse seems at that time to have been formed between the Principality and the kingdom at large; and a devoted attachment to the person of the King appears to have sprung up generally among the Welsh, and to have grown into maturity. We may thus consider the natives of Wales to have enjoyed a longer period of rest and peace than had fallen to their lot for centuries before, when the deposition of Richard, who had taken refuge among their strongholds, and in defence of whom they would have risked their property and their lives, prepared them to follow any chieftain who would head his countrymen against the present dynasty, and direct them in their struggle to throw off the English, or rather, perhaps, the Lancastrian yoke.

The French writer to whom we have so often

referred, M. Creton, in describing the creation of Henry of Monmouth as Prince of Wales, employs these remarkable words: "Then arose Duke Henry. His eldest son, who humbly knelt before him, he made Prince of Wales, and gave him the land; but I think he must conquer it if he will have it: for in my opinion the Welsh would on no account allow him to be their lord, for the sorrow, evil, and disgrace which the English, together with his father, had brought upon King Richard." How correctly this foreigner had formed an estimate of the feelings and principles of the Welsh, will best appear from that portion of Henry's life on which we are now entering. His prediction was fully verified by the event. Henry of Monmouth was compelled to conquer Wales for himself; and in a struggle, too, which lasted through an entire third part of his eventful career.

In accounting for the origin of the civil war in Wales, historians generally dwell on the injustice and insults committed by Lord Grey of Ruthyn on Owyn Glyndowr, and the consequent determination of that resolute chief to take vengeance for the wrongs by which he had been goaded. Probably the far more correct view is to consider the Welsh at large as altogether ready for revolt, and the conduct of Lord Grey as having only instigated Owyn to put himself at their head; at all events to accept the office of leader, to which, as we are told, his

countrymen^a elected him. The train was already laid in the unshaken fidelity of the Welsh to their deposed monarch, whom they believed to be still alive,^b and in the deadly hatred against all who had assisted Henry of Lancaster in his act of usurpation; the spark was supplied by the resentment of a personal injury. His countrymen were ripe for rebellion, and Owyn was equally ready to direct their counsels, and to head them in the field of battle.

^a The proceedings of the Welsh, in detail, at this time, are not found in any contemporary documents, on the authenticity of which we may rely. As to the general facts, however, whether we draw them from the traditions of the Welsh or the English chroniclers, no reasonable doubt can be entertained. But the Author cannot take upon himself the responsibility of vouching for the truth of the biographical particulars recorded of Owyn's early life and adventures, or the measures which he adopted previously to his breaking out into open revolt, any more than he can undertake to establish by proof the genealogy of that chieftain, and trace him through Llewellyn ap Jorwarth to Bleddyn ap Cynfyn, or the third of the five royal tribes.

^b It is curious, in point of history, to observe for how very long a time rumours that Richard was still alive were industriously spread, and as greedily received. The royal proclamations again and again denounced the authors of such false rumours. In the rebellion of the Percies it was asserted that Richard was still alive in the Castle of Chester. In 1406 the Earl of Northumberland (though he had charged Henry with the murder of Richard), in his letter to the Duke of Orleans states the alternative of his being still alive. And even Sir John Oldcastle, in 1418, when before the Parliament, protested that he never would acknowledge that court so long as his liege lord, Richard, was alive in Scotland. — See *Archæologia*, vol. xx. p. 220.

Owyn Glyndowr was no upstart adventurer. He was of an ancient family, or rather, we must say, of princely extraction, being descended from Llew-ellin ap Iorwarth Droyndon, Prince of Wales. We have reason to conclude that he succeeded to large hereditary property. The exact time of his birth is not known : most writers have placed it between 1349 and 1354 ; but it was probably later by five years than the latter of those two dates.^c This extraordinary man, whose unwearied zeal and indomitable bravery, had they taken a different direction, would have merited, humanly speaking, a better fate, was invested by the superstitions of the times with a supernatural character. His vaunt to Hotspur is not so much the offspring of Shakspeare's imagination, as an echo to the popular opinions generally entertained of him :^d

^c Owyn and his brother Tudor were both examined at Chester, September 3, 1386, during the controversy between the families of Scrope and Grosvenor as to the arms of the latter ; and it appears from their own evidence that Owyn was born before Sept. 3, 1359, and that his brother Tudor (who was slain in the battle of Grosmont, or Mynydd Pwl Melin) was three years younger. The record of this controversy assigns to Owyn himself this honourable title "Oweyn Sire [Lord] de Glendore del age xxvii ans et plus."

^d Strange wonders, says Walsingham, happened, as men reported, at the birth of this man ; for, the same night he was born, all his father's horses were found to stand in blood up to their bellies. It is curious to find both the Sloane MS. and the Monk of Evesham pointing to the fulfilment of this prophetic prodigy during the battle in which Edmund Mortimer was taken, when the bodies of the slain lay between the horses feet rolling in blood.

At my birth
 The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes,
 The goats ran from the mountains, and the herds
 Were strangely clamorous in the frightened fields.
 These signs have marked me extraordinary,
 And all the courses of my life do show
 I am not in the roll of common men.

1 HENRY IV. iii. 1.

Whether Owyn had persuaded himself to believe the fabulous stories told of his birth ; or whether for purposes of policy he merely countenanced, in the midst of an ignorant and superstitious people, what others had invented and spread ; there is no doubt that even in his lifetime he was supposed, not only within the borders of his father-land, but even through England itself, to have intercourse with the spirits of the invisible world, and through their agency to possess, among other vague and indefinite powers, a supernatural influence over the elements, and to have the winds and storms at his bidding. Absurd as were the fables told concerning him, they exercised great influence on his enemies as well as his friends ; and few, perhaps, dreaded the powers of his spell more than the King himself. Still, independently of any aid from superstition, Glyndowr combined in his own person many qualities fitting him for the prominent station which he acquired, and which he so long maintained among his countrymen ; and as the enemy of Henry IV. he was one of a very numerous and powerful body, formed from among the first persons of the whole

realm. He received his education in London, and studied in one of the Inns of Court. He became afterwards an esquire of the body to King Richard ; and he was one of the few faithful subjects who remained in his suite till he was taken prisoner in Flint Castle. After his master's fall he was for a short time esquire to the Earl of Arundel, whose castle, situated in the immediate neighbourhood of Glyndowr, was called Castel Dinas Bran. Its ruins, with the hill on the crown of which it was built, still form a most striking object near Llangollen, on the right of the magnificent road leading from Shrewsbury to Bangor.

A few months only had elapsed after the deposition of Richard when those occurrences took place which are said to have driven Glyndowr into open revolt. He was residing on his estate, which lay contiguous to the lands of Lord Grey of Ruthyn. That nobleman claimed and seized some part of Owyn's property. Against this act of oppression Owyn petitioned the Parliament, which sate early in 1400, praying for redress. The Bishop of St. Asaph is said to have cautioned the Parliament not to treat the Welshman with neglect, lest his countrymen should espouse his cause and have recourse to arms. This advice was disregarded, and Owyn's petition was dismissed in the most uncourteous manner.*

* Leland records the expressions of contempt and insult with which the dismissal of Owyn's petition was accompanied,

Another act of injustice and treachery on the part of Lord Grey drove Owyn to take the desperate step either of raising the standard of rebellion, or of joining his countrymen who had already raised it. Lord Grey withheld the letter of summons for the Welsh chief to attend the King in his expedition against Scotland, till it was too late for him to join the rendezvous. Owyn excused himself on the shortness of the notice ; but Lord Grey reported him as disobedient. Aware that he had incurred the King's displeasure, and could expect no mercy, since his deadly foe had possession of the royal ear, Owyn put himself boldly at the head of his rebellious countrymen, who almost unanimously renounced their allegiance to the crown of England, and subsequently acknowledged Owyn as their sovereign lord.

The Monk of Evesham, and the MS. Chronicle which used to be regarded as the compilation of one of Henry V.'s chaplains, both preserved in the British Museum, speak of the Welsh as having first risen in arms, and as having afterwards elected Owyn for their chief. It is, however, remarkable that no mention is made of Owyn Glyndowr in the King's proclamations, or any public document till the spring of 1401. Probably at first the proceed-

and the advice of the Bishop of St. Asaph scorned. "They said they cared not for barefooted blackguards :"—" *Se de scurris nudipedibus non curare.*" We cannot wonder if their national pride was wounded by such contumely.

ings, in which he took afterwards so pre-eminent a part, resembled riotous outrages, breaking forth in entire defiance of the law, but conducted neither on any preconcerted plan, nor under the direction of any one leader.

Lord Grey's ancestors had received Ruthyn with a view to the protection of the frontier ; and on the first indication of the rebellious spirit breaking out in acts of disorder and violence, both the King and the Prince wrote separately to Lord Grey, reminding him of his duty to disperse the rioters, and put down the insurgents. These mandates were despatched probably in the beginning of June 1400, some days before the King departed for the borders of Scotland. Lord Grey, in the letter^f to which we

^f Sir Henry Ellis, to whom we are deeply indebted for his succinct and clear statement of the events of these times, appears, in his introductory remarks on Lord Grey's letter, to have overlooked the date of Henry IV.'s departure for Scotland. He says : " Upon Henry's return, the Welsh were rising in arms, and Lord Grey was ordered to go against them. It seems to have been at this point of time that the letter was penned. It was apparently written in the month of June 1400." But the King did not leave London till towards Midsummer, and we have a letter from him (on his march northward) dated York, July 4, 1400, commanding the mayor and authorities of London to provide corn, wine, &c. for the King's use in Scotland, and as much money as they could raise on his jewels. The writ in consequence of this letter was issued July 12. Walsingham, indeed, says that they seized the opportunity of the King's absence, and rose under their leader Owyn. The King, on his return from Scotland, was at Newcastle upon Tyne on the 3rd of September.

have above referred, supposing that the King had already started on that expedition, returned an answer only to the Prince, acknowledging the receipt of his and his father's commands; but pleading the impossibility of executing them with effect, unless the Prince, with the advice of the King's council, would forward to him a commission with more ample powers, authorizing him to lay hands on the insurgents in whatever part of the country they might chance to be found; ordaining also that no lord's land should be respected as a sanctuary to shield them from the law; and that all the King's officers should be enjoined through the whole territory to aid and assist in quelling the insurrection.*

This nobleman had evidently taken a very alarming view of the state of the country; and the first

* At the back of this letter of Lord Grey to Prince Henry we now find another pasted, sent by David ap Gruffyth to Lord Grey, probably the very epistle which the Earl says he had received "from the greatest thief in Wales;" the few last sentences of which, apparently written in a sort of jingling rhyme, indicate the character of its author and the spirit of the times. "We hope we shall do thee a privy thing: a rope, a ladder, and a ring, high on a gallows for to heng; and thus shall be your ending; and he that made thee be there to helpyng, and we on our behalf shall be well willing." The conclusion of another letter from the same pen, in defiance of Lord Grey's power, breathes the feelings with which the Welsh entered upon this rebellion. "And it was told me that ye been in perpose for to make your men burn and slay in whatsoever country I be and am seisen in (have property). Withouten doubt as many men that ye slay, and as many housen that ye burn for my sake, as many will I burn and slay for your sake; and doubt not

documents which we inspect manifest the uncurbed fury and deadly hatred with which the Welsh rushed into this rebellion. Indeed, the general character of Owyn's campaigns breathes more "of savage warfare than of chivalry." Lord Grey's letter is dated June 23, and must have been written in the year 1400; for, long before the corresponding month in the following year had come round, the Prince had himself been personally engaged in the district which the Earl was more especially appointed to guard.

It does not appear what steps were taken in consequence of this communication of Lord Grey; except that the King, on the 19th of September, issued his first proclamation against the rebels. Probably on his return from Scotland, the King went himself immediately towards Wales; for the Monk of Evesham states expressly that he came from Worcester to Evesham on the 19th of October, and returned the next day for London. In the course, however, of a very few months at the latest, a commission to suppress the rebellion, and restore peace in the northern counties of the Principality, was entrusted to an individual whose character, and fortunes, and death, deeply involved as they are in an eventful period of the history of our

I will have bread and ale of the best that is in your lordship. I can no more. But God keep your worshipful state in prosperity. Written in great haste, at the Park of Brinkiffe, the xi day of June.—GRUFFUTH AP DAVID AP GRUFFUTH."

native land, could not but have recommended the part he then took in Wales to our especial notice under any circumstances whatsoever; whilst his name excites in us feelings of tenfold greater interest when it offers itself in conjunction with the name of Henry of Monmouth.

Henry Percy, eldest son of the Earl of Northumberland, known more familiarly as HOTSPUR, — a name which historians and poets have preferred as characteristic of his decision, and zeal, and the impetuosity of his disposition,—very shortly after Henry IV.'s accession had been appointed not only Warden of the East Marches of Scotland and Governor of Berwick, but also Chief Justice of North Wales and Chester, and Constable of the Castles of Chester, Flint, Conway, and Caernarvon. In this latter capacity, with the utmost promptitude and decision, Hotspur exerted himself to the very best of his power, at great personal labour and expense, to crush the rebellion in its infancy.^b

The letters of this renowned and ill-fated nobleman, the originals of which are preserved among the records of the Privy Council, seem to have escaped the notice of our historians.ⁱ They throw,

^b At as early a date as April 19, 1401, the Pell Rolls record the payment to him of “200*l.* for continuing at his own cost the siege of Conway Castle immediately after the rebels had taken it, without the assistance of any one except the people of the country.”

ⁱ The observations of Sir Harris Nicolas, to whom we are indebted for the publication of these letters, are very just:

however, much light on the affairs of Wales and on Glyndowr's rebellion at this early stage, and to the Biographer of Henry of Monmouth are truly valuable. The first of these original papers, all of which are beautifully corroborative of Hotspur's character as we have received it, both from the notices of the historian and the delineations of the poet, is dated Denbigh, April 10, 1401. It is addressed to the King's council under feelings of annoyance that they could have deemed it necessary to admonish him to exert himself in putting down the insurgents, and restoring peace to the turbulent districts over which his commission gave him authority. His character, he presumes, ought to have been a pledge to them of his conduct. In this letter there is not a shade of anything but devoted loyalty.

The reference which Hotspur makes in this first letter to "those of the council of his most-honoured and redoubted Prince being in these parts," is perhaps the very earliest intimation we have of

"Much information respecting the state of affairs in Wales is afforded by the correspondence of Sir Henry Percy, the celebrated Hotspur; five letters from whom are now for the first time brought to light. Besides their historical value, these letters derive great interest from being the only relics of Hotspur which are known to be preserved, from throwing some light on the cause of his discontent and subsequent rebellion, and still more from being in strict accordance with the supposed haughty, captious, and uncompromising character of that eminent soldier."—Preface, vol. i. p. xxxviii.

Henry of Monmouth being himself personally engaged in suppressing the rebellion in his principality, with the exception, at least, of the inference to be fairly drawn from the acts of the Privy Council in the preceding month. The King at his house, "Cold-harbour," (the same which he afterwards assigned to the Prince,) had assented to a proclamation against the Welsh on the 13th of March; and on the 21st of March the council had agreed to seal an instrument with the great seal, authorizing the Prince himself to discharge any constables of the castles who should neglect their duty, and not execute their office in person. It is, however, to the second letter of Hotspur, dated Caernarvon, May 3rd, 1401, that any one who takes a lively interest in ascertaining the real character of Henry of Monmouth will find his mind irresistibly drawn; he will meditate upon it again and again, and with increasing interest as he becomes more familiar with the circumstances under which it was written; and comparing it with the prejudices almost universally adopted without suspicion and without inquiry, will contemplate it with mingled feelings of surprise and satisfaction. The name of Harry Hotspur, when set side by side with the name of Harry of Monmouth, has been too long associated in the minds of all who delight in English literature, with feelings of unkindness and jealous rivalry. At the risk of anticipating what may hereafter be established more at large, we cannot introduce this document to the

reader without saying that we hail the preservation of this one, among the very few letters of Percy now known to be in existence, with satisfaction and thankfulness. It is as though history were destined of set purpose to correct the fascinating misrepresentations of the poet, and to vindicate a character which has been too long misunderstood. In the fictions of our dramatic poet Hotspur is the very first to bear to Bolinbroke testimony of the reckless, dissolute habits of Henry of Monmouth.^k Hotspur is the very first whom the truth of history declares to have given direct and voluntary evidence to the military talents of this same Prince, and the kindness of his heart,—to his prowess at once and his mercy; the combination of which two noble qualities characterizes his whole life, and of which, blended in delightful harmony, his campaigns in Wales supply this, by no means solitary, example. Hotspur informs the council that North Wales, where he was holding his sessions, was obedient to the law in all points, excepting the rebels in Conway, and in Rees Castle which was in the mountains. “And these,” continues Percy, “will be well chastised, if it so please God, by the force and governance which my redoubted lord the Prince has sent against them, as well of his council as of his retinue, to besiege these rebels in the said

^k King RICHARD II. Act v. scene 3.

Boling.—“Can no man tell of my unthrifty son?”

Percy.—“My Lord, some two days since I saw the Prince,” &c.

castles; which siege, if it can be continued till the said rebels be taken, will bring great ease and profit to the governance of the same country in time to come." "Also," he proceeds, "the commons of the said country of North Wales, that is, the counties of Caernarvon and Merioneth, who have been before me at present, have humbly offered their thanks to my lord the Prince for the great exertions of his kindness and goodwill in procuring their pardon at the hands of our sovereign lord the King."¹ The pardon itself, dated Westminster, 10th of March 1401, bears testimony to these exertions of Prince Henry in behalf of the rebels: "Of our especial grace, and at the prayer of our dearest first-born son, Henry Prince of Wales, we have pardoned all treasons, rebellions, &c."^m Henry of Monmouth, when one of the first noblemen and most renowned warriors of the age bears this testimony to his character for valour and for kind-heartedness, had not quite completed his fourteenth year.

¹ The commons at the same time, of their own free will, offered to pay as much as they had formerly paid to King Richard.

^m An exception by name is made of Owyn Glyndowr, and also of Rees ap Tudor, and William ap Tudor. These two brothers, however, surrendered the Castle of Conway, and William with thirty-one more received the royal pardon, dated 8th July 1401. Pardons in the same terms had been granted on the 6th May to the rebels of Chirk; on the 10th, to those of Bromfield and Oswestry; on the 16th, to those of Ellesmere; and, upon June 15th, to the rebels of Whityngton.

This communication of Henry Percy, as remarkable as it is interesting, appears to fix to the year 1401 the date of the following, the very first letter known to exist from Henry of Monmouth. It is dated Shrewsbury, May 15, and is addressed to the Lords of the Council, whom he thanks for the kind attention paid by them to all his wants during his absence in Wales. The epistle breathes the spirit of a gallant young warrior full of promptitude and intrepidity.^a It may be surmised, perhaps, that the letter was written by the Prince's secretary; and that the sentiments and turn of thought here exhibited may, after all, be no fair test of his own mind. But this is mere conjecture and assumption, requiring the testimony of facts to confirm it: and, against it, we must observe, that there is a simplicity, a raciness and an individuality of character pervading Henry's letters which seem to stamp them for his own. Especially do they stand out in broad contrast, when put side by side with the equally characteristic despatches of Hotspur.

LETTER OF PRINCE HENRY TO THE COUNCIL.

" Very dear and entirely well-beloved, we greet you much from our whole heart, thanking you very sincerely for the kind attention you have given to our wants during our absence; and we pray of you very earnestly the con-

^a The original, in French, is preserved in the British Museum. —Cotton, Cleop. viii. fol. 117 b.

tinuance of your good and friendly services, as our trust is in you. As to news from these parts, if you wish to hear of what has taken place, we were lately informed that Owyn Glyndowr [Oweyn de Glyndourdy] had assembled his forces, and those of other rebels, his adherents, in great numbers, purposing to commit inroads; and, in case of any resistance to his plans on the part of the English, to come to battle with them: and so he boasted to his own people. Wherefore we took our men, and went to a place of the said Owyn, well built, which was his chief mansion, called Saghern, where we thought we should have found him, if he wished to fight, as he said. And, on our arrival there, we found no person. So we caused the whole place to be set on fire, and many other houses around it, belonging to his tenants. And then we went straight to his other place of Glyndourdy, to seek for him there. There we burnt a fine lodge in his park, and the whole country round. And we remained there all that night. And certain of our people sallied forth, and took a gentleman of high degree of that country, who was one of the said Owyn's chieftains. This person offered five hundred pounds for his ransom to save his life, and to pay that sum within two weeks. Nevertheless that was not accepted, and he was put to death; and several of his companions, who were taken the same day, met with the same fate. We then proceeded to the commote of Edirnyon in Merionethshire, and there laid waste a fine and populous country; thence we went to Powys, and, there being in Wales a want of provender for horses, we made our people carry oats with them, and we tarried there for — days.^o And to give you fuller information of this expedition, and all other news from these parts at present, we send to you our well-beloved esquire, John de Waterton, to whom you will be pleased to give entire faith and credence in what he shall report to you on

^o The original is here imperfect.

our part with respect to the above-mentioned affair. And may our Lord have you always in his holy keeping.—Given under our signet, at Shrewsbury, the 15th day of May.”

Two days only after the date of this epistle, Hotspur despatched another letter from Denbigh, which seems to convey the first intimation of his dissatisfaction with the King's government; a feeling which rapidly grew stronger, and led probably to the subsequent outbreaking of his violence and rebellion. Hotspur presses upon the council the perilous state of the Welsh Marches, at the same time declaring that he could not endure the expense and labour then imposed upon him more than one month longer; within four days at furthest from the expiration of which time he must absolutely resign his command.

In less than ten days after this despatch of Percy, the King's proclamation mentions Owyn Glyndowr by name, as a rebel determined to invade and ravage England. The King, announcing his own intention to proceed the next day towards Worcester to crush the rebellion himself, commands the sheriffs of various counties to join him with their forces, wheresoever he might be. At this period the rebels entered upon the campaign with surprising vigour. Many simultaneous assaults appear to have been made against the English in different parts of the borders. On the 28th of May a proclamation declares Glyndowr to be in the Marches

of Caermarthen; and, only ten days before (May 18th), a commission was issued to attack the Welsh, who were besieging William Beauchamp and his wife in the Castle of Abergavenny; whilst, at the same time, the people of Salop were excused a subsidy, in consideration of the vast losses they had sustained by the inroads of the Welsh.

CHAPTER VI.

GLYNDOWR JOINED BY WELSH STUDENTS OF OXFORD. — TAKES LORD GREY PRISONER. — HOTSPUR'S FURTHER DESPATCHES. — HE QUILTS WALES. — REFLECTIONS ON THE EVENTFUL LIFE AND PREMATURE DEATH OF ISABELLA, RICHARD'S WIDOW. — GLYNDOWR DISPOSED TO COME TO TERMS. — THE KING'S EXPEDITIONS TOWARDS WALES ABORTIVE. — MARRIAGE PROPOSED BETWEEN HENRY AND KATHARINE OF NORWAY. — THE KING MARRIES JOAN OF NAVARRE.

1401.

WHEN Owyn Glyndowr raised the standard of rebellion in his native land, and assuming to himself the name and state and powers of an independent sovereign, under the title of "Prince of Wales," declared war against Henry of Bolinbroke and his son, he was fully impressed with the formidable power of his antagonists, and with the fate that might await him should he fail in his attempt to rescue Wales from the yoke of England. Embarked in a most perilous enterprise, a cause of life or death, he vigorously entered on the task of securing every promising means of success. His countrymen, whom he now called his subjects, soon flocked

to his standard from all quarters. Not only did those who were already in the Principality take up arms ; but numbers also who had left their homes, and were resident in distant parts of the kingdom, returned forthwith as at the command of their prince and liege lord. The Welsh scholars,^a who were pursuing their studies in the University of Oxford, were summoned by Owyn, and the names of some who obeyed the mandate are recorded. Owyn at the same time negotiated for assistance from France, with what success we shall see hereafter ; and sent also his emissaries to Scotland and “the distant isles.” On those of his countrymen who espoused the cause of the King, and refused to join his standard, he afterwards poured the full fury of his vengeance ; and in the uncurbed madness of his rage, forgetful of the future welfare of his native land, and of his own interests should he be established as its prince, unmindful also of the respect which even enemies pay to the sacred edifices of the common faith, he reduced to ashes not only the houses of his opponents, but Episcopal palaces, monasteries, and cathedrals within the Principality.

Owyn Glyndŵr was in a short time so well supported by an army, undisciplined no doubt, and in all respects ill appointed, but yet devoted to him and their common cause, that he was emboldened to try his strength with Lord Grey in the field.

^a See Ellis's Original Letters, second series, vol. i. p. 8.

A battle, fought (as it should seem) in the very neighbourhood of Glyndowr^d,^b terminated in favour of Owyn, who took the Earl prisoner, and carried him into the fastnesses of Snowdon. The precise date of this conflict is not known; probably it was at the opening of spring: the circumstances also of his capture are very differently represented. It is generally asserted that a marriage with one of Owyn's daughters was the condition of regaining his liberty proposed to the Earl; that the marriage was solemnized; and that Owyn then, instead of keeping his word and releasing him, demanded of him a most exorbitant ransom. It is, moreover, affirmed, that the Earl remained Glyndowr's prisoner to the day of his death. Now, that Lord Grey fell into the Welsh chieftain's hands as a prisoner, is beyond question; so it is that he paid a heavy ransom: but that he died in confinement is certainly not true, for he accompanied Henry V. to France, and also served him by sea. The report of his marriage with Owyn's daughter, might have originated in some confusion of Lord Grey with Sir Edmund Mortimer; who unquestionably did take one of the Welsh chieftain's daughters for his wife.^c It is scarcely probable that both

^b Lingard places the site of Owyn's victory over Lord Grey on the banks of the "Vurnway."

^c The Monk of Evesham reports that Lord Grey was released about the year 1404, having first paid to Owyn five thousand marks for his ransom, and leaving his two sons as pledges for the payment of five thousand more. The same authority informs

Owyn's prisoners should have married his daughters ; and still less probable that he should have exacted so large a ransom from his son-in-law as to exhaust his means, and prevent him from acting as a baron of the realm was then expected to act. Dugdale's Baronage gives the Earl two wives, without naming the daughter of Glyndowr. Hardyng, in his Chronicle presented to Henry VI, thus describes the affair :

Soone after was the same Lord Gray in feelde
Fighting taken, and holden prisoner
By Owayne, so that hym in prison helde
Till his ransom was made, and fynaunce clear,
Ten thousand marks, and fully payed were ;
For whiche he was so poor then all his life,
That no power he had to war, nor stryfe.

Another letter from Henry Percy to the council, dated June 4, 1401, is very interesting in several points of view. It proves that the negociations "carried in and out," mentioned in a letter written by the chamberlain of Caernarvon to the King's council, had been successful, and that the Scots had sent aid to the Welsh chieftain : it proves also that Hotspur himself was at this time (though bitterly dissatisfied) carrying on the war for the King in the very heart of Wales, and amidst its mountain-recesses and strongholds ; and that Owyn was at that time

us that Edmund Mortimer espoused the daughter of Owyn with great solemnity. The Pell Rolls (1 Henry V. June 27) leave us in no doubt as to the fact of that marriage.

assailed on all sides by the English forces, a circumstance which might probably have led to his "good intention to return to his allegiance," at the close of the present year. Henry Percy declares to the council that he can support the expenses of the campaign no longer. He informs them of an engagement in which, assisted by Sir Hugh Browe and the Earl of Arundel, the only Lords Marchers who had joined him in the expedition, he had a few days before routed the Welsh at Cader Idris. News, he adds, had just reached him of a victory gained by Lord Powis^d over Owyn; also that an English vessel had been retaken from the Scots, and a Scotch vessel of war had been captured at Milford. Another letter, dated 3rd July, (probably the same year, 1401,) reiterates his complaints of non-payment of his forces, and of the government having underrated his services; it expresses his hope also that, since he had written to the King himself with a statement of his destitute condition, should any evil happen to castle, town, or march, the blame would not be cast on him, whose means were so utterly crippled, but would fall on the heads of those who refused the supplies. Henry IV. had certainly not neglected this rebellion in Wales, though evidently the measures adopted against the insurgents were

^d This nobleman, John Charlton, Lord Powis, died on the 19th of October following, and was succeeded by his son Edward, who, on the 5th of August, (probably in 1402 or 1403,) applied to the council for a reinforcement.—Min. of Coun.

not so vigorous at the commencement as the urgency of the case required. His exchequer was exhausted, and he had other business in hand to drain off the supplies as fast as they could possibly be collected. He was, therefore, contented for the present to keep the rebels in check, without attempting to crush them by pouring in an overwhelming force from different points at once.

Towards the middle of this summer, the King marched in person to Worcester. He had directed the sheriffs to forward their contingents thither; but, when he arrived at that city, he changed his purpose and soon returned to London. Among the considerations which led to this change in his plans, we may probably reckon the following. In the first place, he found his son the Prince, Lord Powis, and Henry Percy, in vigorous operation against the rebels; his arrival at Worcester having been only three or four days after the date of Percy's last letter. In the next place, the council had urged him not to go in person against the rebels: besides, almost all the inhabitants of North Wales had returned to their allegiance, and had been pardoned. He was, moreover, naturally anxious to summon a parliament, with a view of replenishing his exhausted treasury, and enabling himself to enter upon the campaign with means more calculated to insure success.

In a letter to his council, dated Worcester, 8th June 1401, the King refers to two points of advice

suggested by them. "Inasmuch as you have advised us," he says, "to write to our much beloved son, the Prince, and to others, who may have in their possession any jewels which ought to be delivered with our cousin the Queen, (Isabella,) know ye, that we will send to our said son, that, if he has any of such jewels, he will send them with all possible speed to you at our city of London, where, if God will, we intend to be in our own person before the Queen's departure; and we will cause to be delivered to her there the rest of the said jewels, which we and others our children have in our keeping." In answer to their advice that he would not go in person against the rebels, because they were not in sufficient strength, and of too little reputation to warrant that step, he said that he found they had risen in great numbers, and called for his personal exertions. He forwarded to them at the same time a copy of the letter which he had just received from Owyn himself. Not from this correspondence only, but from other undisputed documents, and from the loud complaints of French writers,* we are compelled to infer something extremely unsatisfactory in the conduct of Henry IV. with regard to the valuable paraphernalia of Isabella, the maiden-widow of Richard. To avoid restoring these treasures, which fell into his hands on the capture of that unfor-

* Many of our own historians have, either in ignorance or design, very much misled their readers on the subject.

fortunate monarch, Henry proposed, in November 1399, a marriage between one of his sons and one of the daughters of the French monarch. In January 1400 a truce was signed between the two kingdoms, and the same negociators (the Bishop of Durham and the Earl of Worcester) were directed to treat with the French ambassadors on the terms of the restitution of Isabella; and so far did they immediately proceed, that horses were ordered for her journey to Dover. But legal doubts as to her dower (she not being twelve years of age) postponed her departure till the next year. She had arrived at Boulogne certainly on the 1st of August 1401; and was afterwards delivered up to her friends by the Earl of Worcester, with the solemn assurance of her spotless purity.

It is impossible to glance at this lady's brief and melancholy career without feelings of painful interest:—espoused when yet a child to the reigning monarch of England; whilst yet a child, crowned Queen of England; whilst yet a child, become a virgin-widow; when she was not yet seventeen years old, married again to Charles, Earl of Angouleme; and three years afterwards, before she reached the twentieth anniversary of her birthday, dying in childbed.^f

^f It is not generally understood, (indeed, some of our historians have not only been ignorant of the fact, but have asserted the contrary,) that this princess was the elder sister of Katharine of Valois, married thirteen years after Isabella's

By the above letter of the King, which led to this digression, we are informed that the Prince was neither with his father, nor in London; for the King promised to write to him to send the jewels to London. He was probably at that time on the borders of North Wales; or engaged in reducing the Castles of Conway and Rhees, and in bringing that district into subjection. Indeed, that the Prince was still personally exerting himself in suppressing the Welsh towards the north of the Principality, seems to be put beyond all question by the records of the Privy Council, which state that "certain members of the Prince's council brought with them to the King's council the indenture between the said Prince and Henry Percy the son (Chief Justice) on one part, and those who seized the Castle^s

death to Henry of Monmouth. Katharine was not born till after Isabella's restoration from England to her father's home. Isabella was born November 9, 1389; was solemnly married by the Archbishop of Canterbury to Richard II. in Calais, November 4, 1397 (not quite nine years old); was crowned at Westminster on the 8th of January following; was married to her second husband, 29th June 1406; and died at Blois, 13th September 1409.—Anselme, vol. i. p. 114.

* One of these, Wm. ap Tudor, with thirty-one others, was pardoned July 8. In his petition he suggests that in all disputes between the burgesses and themselves, there ought to be a fair inquest, half Welsh and half English. This is supposed to have been the usual law; but probably in these turbulent times it might too often have been dispensed with for a less impartial mode of trial. Besides, among the many severe enactments against the Welsh, the King, in 1400, had assented to an ordinance proposed by the Commons, to remain in force for three years, that no Englishman should

of Conway on the other part, made at the time of the restitution of the same castle.”^h

Owyn appears to have left his own country, in which the spirit of rebellion had received a considerable though temporary check ; and to have been at this period exciting and heading the rebels in South Wales, especially about Caermarthen and Gower.

Hotspur himself left Wales probably about the July or August of this year, 1401 ; for on the 1st of September he was appointed one of the commissioners to treat with the Scots for peace ; and he was present at the solemn espousals which were celebrated by proxy at Eltham, April 3, 1402, between Henry IV. and Joan of Navarre. We must, therefore, refer to a subsequent date the information quoted by Sir Henry Ellis from an original paper in the British Museum, “that Jankin Tyby of the

have judgment against him at the suit of a Welshman, except at the hands of judges and a jury entirely English.

^h The castles in Wales were at this time very scantily garrisoned ; indeed, the smallness of the number of the men by whom some of them were defended is scarcely credible. And yet, in the exhausted state of the treasury of the King, of the Prince, of Henry Percy and others, those castles, even in the miserably limited extent of their establishments, could with difficulty be retained. When besieged, the garrison could never venture upon a sally. For example, Conway had only fifteen men-at-arms and sixty archers, kept at an expense of 714*l.* 15*s.* 10*d.* annually : Caernarvon had twenty men-at-arms and eighty archers : Harlech had ten men-at-arms and thirty archers.— See Sir H. Ellis’s Original Letters.

north countri bringthe lettres owte of the northe country to Owein, as thei demed from Henr. son Percy." Soon after the departure of Percy, a proclamation, dated 18th September 1401, notifies the rapid progress of disaffection and rebellion among the Welsh: whether it was secretly encouraged by him at this early date, or not, is matter only of conjecture. His growing discontent, visibly shown in his own letters, this vague rumour that Jankin Tyby might be the confidential messenger for his treasonable purposes, and his subsequent conduct, combine to render the suspicion by no means improbable. The proclamation states that a great part of the inhabitants of Wales had gone over to Owyn, and commands all ablebodied men to meet the King at Worcester on the 1st, or, at the furthest, the 2nd of October. Perhaps this, like his former visit to Worcester, was little more than a demonstration of his force.ⁱ Historians generally say that he made the first of his expeditions into Wales in the July of the following year; the Minutes of Council prove at all events that he was there in the present autumn, but how long or with what results does not appear. The council

ⁱ The Monk of Evesham states expressly that, towards the end of this year, the King, intending to hasten to Wales for the third time, came to Evesham on Michaelmas-day, September 29, but not with so large a force as before; and on the third day, after breakfast, he proceeded to Worcester, whence, after the ninth day, with the advice of his council, he returned through Alcester to London.

met in November 1401, to deliberate, among other subjects, upon the affairs of Wales, “from which country (as the Minute expressly states) our sovereign lord the King hath but lately returned,^k having appointed the Earl of Worcester to be Lieutenant of South Wales, and Captain of Cardigan.”¹

The record of this council is remarkably interesting on more than one point. It throws great light on the state of Owyn’s mind, and his attachment to the Percies; on the confidence still reposed by the King’s government in Percy, and on the condition of Prince Henry himself. The several chastisements which Owyn and his party had received from the Prince, from Percy, from Lord Powis and others, had perhaps at this time made him very doubtful of the issue of the struggle, and inclined him to negotiate for his own pardon, and the

^k On Monday, October 16, 1402, the Commons “thank the King for his great labour in body and mind, especially in his journey to Scotland; and because, on his return, when he heard at Northampton of the rebellion in Wales, he had at *that* time, and *three times* since, with a great army (as well the King as my lord the Prince) laboured in divers parts.” When Owyn is represented by Shakspeare as recounting the various successful struggles in which he had tried his strength with Bolinbroke, the poet had solid ground on which to build the boastings of the Welsh chieftain:

“Three times hath Henry Bolinbroke made head
Against my power: thrice from the banks of Wye
And sandy-bottom’d Severn have I sent him
Bootless home, and weather-beaten back.”

¹ The regular appointment bears date 31st March 1402.

peace of the country. The Minute of Council says, "To know the King's will about treating with Glyndowr to return to his allegiance, *seeing his good intention at present thereto.*" His readiness to treat is accompanied, as we find in the same record, with a declaration that he was not himself the cause of the destruction going on in his native land, nor of the daily captures, and the murders there; and that he would most gladly return to peace. As to his inheritance, he protests that he had only received a part, and not his own full right. And even now he would willingly come to the borders, and speak and treat with any lords, provided the commons would not raise a rumour and clamour that he was purposed to destroy "*all who spoke the English language.*" He seems to have been apprehensive, should he venture to approach the marches to negotiate a peace, that the violence and rage of the people at large would endanger his personal safety. No wonder, for his footsteps were to be traced everywhere by the blood of men, and the ashes of their habitations and sacred edifices. At the same time, he expressed his earnest desire to carry on the treaty of peace through the Earl of Northumberland, for whom he professes to entertain great regard and esteem, in preference to any other English nobleman.

Whether any steps were taken in consequence of this present opening for peace, or not, we are not told. But we have reason to suppose that Wales

was in comparative tranquillity through the following winter^m and spring. The rebel chief, however, again very shortly carried the sword and flame with increased horrors through his devoted native land. We read of no battle or skirmish till the campaign of the next year.

The questions relating to Prince Henry, which were submitted to this council, inform us incidentally of the important fact, that though he was now intrusted with the command of the forces against the Welsh, and was assisted in his office (just as was the King) by a council, yet it was deemed right to appoint him an especial governor, or tutor (*maistre*). He was now in his fifteenth year. These Minutes also make it evident that the soldiers employed in his service looked for their pay to him, and not to the King's exchequer. We shall have frequent occasion to observe the great personal inconveniences to which this practice subjected the Prince, and how injurious it was to the service generally. But the evil was unavoidable; for at that time the royal exchequer was quite drained.

“As to the article touching the governance of

^m The Pell Rolls contain many items of payment about this time to the Prince of Wales; one of which specifies the sum “of 400*l.* for one hundred men-at-arms, each 12*d.* per day, and four hundred archers at 6*d.* per day, for one month, who were sent with despatch to Harlech Castle to remove the besiegers.” Probably they had been sent some considerable time before the date of this payment, Dec. 14, 1401.

the Prince, as well for him to have a tutor or guardian, as to provide money for the support of his vast expenses in the garrisons of his castles in Wales, and the wages of his men-at-arms and archers, whom he keeps from day to day for resisting the malice of the rebels of the King, it appears to the council, if it please the King, that the Isle of Anglesey ought to be restored to the prince, and that Henry Percyⁿ should agree, and have compensation from the issues of the lands which belonged to the Earl of March; and that all other possessions which ought to belong to the Prince should be restored, and an amicable arrangement be made with those in whose hands they are. And as for a governor for the Prince, may it please the King to choose one of these,—the Earl of Worcester, Lord Lovel, Mr. Thomas Erpyngham, or the Lord Say; and, for the Prince's expenses, that 1000*l.* be assigned from the rents of the Earl of March, which were due about last Michaelmas." We have reason to believe that the Earl of Worcester, Thomas Percy, was appointed Henry of Monmouth's tutor and preceptor. He remained in attendance upon him till, with the guilt of aggravated treachery, he abruptly left his prince and pupil to join his nephew Hotspur before the battle of Shrewsbury.

ⁿ The whole of Anglesey was granted to Hotspur for life.
1 Hen. IV, 12th October 1399.—MS. Donat. 4596.

We are not informed how long Prince Henry remained at this period in Wales, after Percy had left it. Probably (as it has been already intimated) there was an armistice virtually, though not by any formal agreement, through that winter and the spring of 1402. The next undoubted information as to the Prince fixes him in London in the beginning of the following May, when being in the Tower, in the presence of his father, and with his consent, he declares himself willing to contract a marriage with Katharine, sister of Eric, King of Norway;° and on the 26th of the same month, being then in his castle of Tutbury, in the diocese of Lincoln, he confirms this contract, and authorises the notary public to affix his seal to the agreement. The pages of authentic history remind us, that too many marriage-contracts in every rank of life, and in every age of the world, have been the result, not of mutual affection between the affianced bride and bridegroom, but of pecuniary and political considerations. Perhaps when kings negotiate and princes approve, their exalted station renders the transaction more notorious, and the stipulated conditions may be more unreservedly confessed. But it may well be doubted whether the same motives do not equally operate in every grade of life; whilst those objects which

° He was present in the Castle of Berkhamsted on the 14th of May, at the sealing of the marriage contract of his sister Philippa with King Eric.—Fæd. viii. 259, 260.

should be primary and indispensable, are regarded as secondary and contingent. Happiness springing from mutual affection, may doubtless grow and ripen, despite of such arrangements, in the families of the noble, the wealthy, the middle classes, and the poor; but the chances are manifold more, that coldness, and dissatisfaction, and mutual carelessness of each other's comforts will be the permanent result. We must however bear in mind, when estimating the moral worth of an individual, that negociations of this kind in the palaces of kings imply nothing of that cold-heartedness by which many are led into connexions from which their affections revolt. The individual's character seems altogether protected from reprobation by the usage of the world, and the necessity of the case. State-considerations impose on princes restraints, compelling them to acquiesce in measures which excite in us other feelings than indignation or contempt. We regret the circumstance, but we do not condemn the parties. Henry IV. of England, and Eric of Norway, fancied they saw political advantages likely to arise from the nuptials of Henry's son with Eric's sister; and the document we have just quoted tells us that the boy Henry, then not fifteen, and still under tutors and governors, gave his consent to the proposed alliance.

The more rare however the occurrence, the more general is the admiration with which an union in the palaces of monarchs is contemplated when

mutual respect and attachment precede the marriage, and conjugal love and domestic happiness attend it. And here we are irresistibly tempted to contemplate with satisfaction and delight the unsuccessful issue of this negociation, whilst Henry was yet a boy ; and to anticipate what must be repeated in its place, that, to whatever combination of circumstances, and course of events and state-considerations, the marriage of Henry of Monmouth with Katharine of France may possibly be referred, he proved himself to have formed for her a most sincere and heartfelt attachment before their union ; and, whenever his duty did not separate them, to have lived with her in the possession of great conjugal felicity. Even the dry details of the Exchequer issues bear most gratifying, though curious, testimony to their domestic habits, and their enjoyment of each other's society.

Whilst the King was thus negotiating a marriage for his son, he was himself engaged by solemn espousals to marry, as his second wife, Joan of Navarre, Duchess of Brittany. As well in the most exalted, as in the most humble family in the realm, such an event as this can never take place without involving consequences of deepest moment and most lively interest to all parties,—to the husband, to his wife, and to their respective children. If he has been happy in his choice, a man cannot provide a more substantial blessing for his offspring than by joining himself by the most sacred

of all ties to a woman who will cheerfully and lovingly perform the part of a conscientious and affectionate mother towards them. If the choice is unhappy; if there be a want of sound religious and moral principle, a neglect, or carelessness and impatience in the discharge of domestic duties; if a discontented, suspicious, cold, and unkind spirit accompany the new bride, domestic comfort must take flight, and all the proverbial evils of such a state must be realized. The marriage of Henry of Monmouth's father with Joan of Navarre does not enable us to view the bright side of this alternative. Of the new Queen we hear little for many years;^p but, at the end of those years of comparative silence, we find Henry V. compelled to remove from his mother-in-law all her attendants, and to commit her to the custody of Lord John Pelham in the castle of Pevensey.^q She was charged with having entertained malicious and treasonable designs against the life of the King, her son-in-law. The Chronicle of London, (1419,) throwing^r an air of mystery and superstition over the whole affair, asserts that Queen Joanna excited her confessor,

^p Our history supplies very scanty information as to the family of this royal lady. In the year 1412 a safe conduct is given to Giles of Brittany, son of the Queen, to come to England, to tarry and to return, with twenty men and horses.—Rymer, May 20, 1412.

^q Otterbourne.

^r "By sorcerye and nygrammancie."

one friar Randolph,^s a master in divinity, to destroy the King; "but, as God would, his falseness was at last espied:" "wherefore," as the Chronicle adds, "the Queen forfeited her lands."^t Of this marriage of Henry IV. with Joan of Navarre very little notice beyond the bare fact has been taken by our English historians. Many particulars, however, are found in the histories of Brittany. It appears that the Duchess, who was the widow of Philip de Mont Forte, Duke of Brittany, by whom she had sons and daughters, was solemnly contracted to Henry by her proxy, Anthony Rys, at Eltham, on the 3rd of April 1402, in the presence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Earl of Somerset, the Earl of Northumberland and his son Hotspur, the Earl of Worcester, Thomas Langley, Keeper of the Privy Seal, and others. Having appointed guardians for her son, the young Duke of Brittany, she left Nantes on the 26th December, embarked

^s The Pell Rolls (27th Sept. 1418) leave us in no doubt that John Randolph's goods were forfeited, a circumstance strongly confirming the report of his conspiracy. Payment is also made to certain persons for carrying (Feb. 8, 1420) John Randolph, of the order of Friars Minor, Shrewsbury, from Normandy to the Tower.

^t No doubt can remain as to the accuracy of the London Chronicle in this particular: several payments are on record, expressly declared to have been made out of the lands and property of this unhappy woman. Thus, the issue of a thousand marks to the Abbess of Syon (9th May 1421) is made from "the monies issuing from the possessions of Joanna, Queen of England."

on board one of the ships sent by Henry, at Camaret, on the 13th January, and sailed the next day, intending to land at Southampton. After a stormy passage of five days, the squadron was forced into a port in Cornwall. She was married on the 7th, and was crowned at Westminster on the 25th, of February following.^u By Henry she had no child.

^u See Acts of Privy Council, vol. i. p. 185. The Editor quotes Lobinau's *Histoire de Bretagne*, tom. ii. pp. 874, 878; and Morice's *Histoire Ecclésiastique et Civile de Bretagne*, tom. i. p. 433.

CHAPTER VII.

GLYNDOWR'S VIGOROUS MEASURES. — SLAUGHTER OF HEREFORDSHIRE MEN. — MORTIMER TAKEN PRISONER. — HE JOINS GLYNDOWR. — HENRY IMPORES SUCCOURS, — PAWNS HIS PLATE TO SUPPORT HIS MEN. — THE KING'S TESTIMONY TO HIS SON'S CONDUCT. — THE KING, AT BURTON-ON-TRENT, HEARS OF THE REBELLION OF THE PERCIES.

1402—1403.

IF Owyn Glyndwr, as we have supposed, allowed Wales to remain undisturbed by battles and violence through the winter^a and spring, it was only to employ the time in preparing for a more vigorous campaign. The first battle of which we have any historical certainty, was fought June 12, 1402, near Melienydd, (Dugdale says, "upon the mountain called Brynglas, near Knighton in Melenyth,") in Radnorshire. The whole array of Herefordshire was routed on that field. More than

^a At the opening of the year 1402 (January 18), one hundred marks were paid by the treasury to the Bishop of Bangor, whose lands had been in great part destroyed.—Pell Rolls. This prelate was Richard Young, who was translated to Rochester in 1404.

one thousand Englishmen were slain, on whom the Welsh were guilty of savage, unheard-of indignities. The women especially gave vent to their rage and fury by actions too disgraceful to be credible were they not recorded as uncontradicted facts. For the honour of the sex, we wish to regard them as having happened only once; whilst we would bury the disgusting details in oblivion.^b Owyn was victorious, and took many of high degree prisoners; among whom was Sir Edmund Mortimer, the uncle of the Earl of March. Perhaps the most authentic statement of this victory as to its leading features, though without any details, is found in a letter from the King to his council, dated Berkhamstead, June 25.

“The rebels have taken my beloved cousin,^c Esmon Mortymer, and many other knights and esquires. We are resolved, consequently, to go in

^b To the present day the vestiges of two temporary encampments (army against army) are visible; and there are barrows in the neighbourhood, which, according to the tradition of the country, cover the bones of those who fell in this battle, not less, they say, than three thousand men. The remains of Owyn Glyndowr's camp are found at a place called Monachdy, in the parish of Blethvaugh; and about two miles below, in the parish of Whittow, is the earthwork supposed to have been thrown up by Sir Edmund Mortimer. Half-way between is a hill called Brynglas, where the battle is said to have been fought. In the valley of the Lug are two large tumuli, which are believed to cover the slain.

^c A general mistake has prevailed among historians with regard to this prisoner of Owyn's. Walsingham, Stowe, Hall, Rapin,

our own person with God's permission. You will therefore command all in our retinue and pay to meet us at Lichfield, where we intend to be at the latest on the 7th of July." The proclamation for an array "to meet the King at Lichfield, and proceed with him towards Wales to check the insolence and malice of Owyn Glyndowr and other rebels," was issued the same day. On the 5th of July,^d the King, being at Westminster, appointed Hugh de Waterton governor of his children, John and Philippa, till his return from Wales. An order of council at Westminster, on the last day of July, the King himself being present, seems to leave us no alternative in deciding that Henry made two expeditions to Wales this summer; the first at the commencement of July, the second towards the end of August. This appears to have escaped the observation of historians. Walsingham speaks only of

Hume, Sharon Turner, with others, have uniformly represented Edmund Earl of March to have been the notable warrior then captured by Glyndowr; whereas he was only ten years of age, and a prisoner of the King. Dr. Griffin, a Monmouthshire antiquary, pointed out the mistake many years ago.

^d On the 14th of July the council issue commands to the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Norwich to array their clergy for the defence of the realm; a measure seldom resorted to, and only on occasions of great emergence and alarm. A fortnight before this order (30th June), the King had written from Harborough to his council, acquainting them with the victory gained for him over the Scots at Nisbet Moor by the Scotch Earl of March, and commanding them to protect the marches.

one, and that before the Feast of the Assumption, August 25; in which he represents the King and his army to have been well-nigh destroyed by storms of rain, snow, and hail, so terrible as to have excited the belief that they were raised by the machination of the devil, and of course at Owyn's bidding. This order of council is directed to many sheriffs, commanding them to proclaim an array through their several counties to meet the King at Shrewsbury,^e on the 27th of August at the latest, to proceed with him into Wales.^f The order declares the necessity of this second array to have originated in the impossibility, through the shortness of the time, of the King's chastising the rebels, who lurked in mountains and woods; and states his determination to be there again shortly, and to remain fifteen days for the final overthrow and destruction of his enemies. How lamentably he was mistaken in his calculation of their resistance, and his own powers of subjugating them, the sequel proved to him too clearly. The rebellion from first to last was protracted through almost as many years as the days he had numbered for its utter ex-

^e The Monk of Evesham says that in this year, about August 29, (*Festum Decollationis Johannis Bapt.*) the King went again with a great force into Wales, and after twenty days returned with disgrace.

^f An order, dated Ravensdale, is made on the sheriff of Lincoln to be ready, notwithstanding the last order, to go towards the marches of Scotland; and, if the Scots should not come, then to be at Shrewsbury on the 1st of September.

inction. The order on the sheriff of Derby commands him to go with his contingent to Chester, "to our dearest son the Prince," on the 27th of August, and to advance in his retinue to Wales. On this occasion,^g it is said that Henry invaded Wales in three points at once, himself commanding one division of his army, the second being headed by the Prince, the third by Lord Arundel. The details of these measures, under the personal superintendence of the King, are not found in history. Probably Walsingham's account of their total failure must be admitted as nearest the truth. That no material injury befel Owyn from them, and that neither were his means crippled, nor his resolution daunted, is testified by the inroads which, not long after, he made into England with redoubled impetuosity.

The following winter, we may safely conclude, was spent by the Welsh chieftain in negotiations both with the malcontent lords of England, and with the courts of France and Scotland; in recruiting his forces and improving his means of warfare;^h for, before the next midsummer, (as we know on the best authority,) he was prepared to engage in an expedition into England, with a power too for-

^g Walsingham's words would seem to apply more fitly to this second and more important expedition of 1402 than the preceding one in July: "*Tantus armorum strepitus.*"

^h On 20th October 1402, a commission issued to receive into their allegiance and amnesty the rebels of Usk, Caerleon, and Trellech, in Monmouthshire.

midable for the Prince and his retinue to resist without further reinforcement. During this winter also a most important accession accrued to the power and influence of Owyn by the defection from the royal cause of his prisoner Sir Edmund Mortimer, who became devotedly attached to him. King Henry had, we are told, refused to allow a ransom to be paid for Mortimer, though urged to it by Henry Percy, who had married Mortimer's sister. The consequence of this ungracious refusalⁱ was, that he joined Glyndowr, whose daughter, as the Monk of Evesham informs us, he married with the greatest solemnity about the end of November.^k In a fortnight after this marriage, Mortimer announced to his tenants his junction with Owyn, and called upon them to forward his views. The letter, written in French, is preserved in the British Museum.

ⁱ Leland, in his *Collectanea*, quotes a passage from another chronicler, which records the very words of Percy and the King on this occasion. Percy asked the King's permission for Mortimer to be ransomed, to whom the King replied that he would not strengthen his enemies against himself by the money of the realm. Percy then said, "Ought any man so to expose himself to danger for you and your kingdom, and you not succour him in his danger?" The King answered in wrath, "You are a traitor; do you wish me to succour the enemies of myself and of my kingdom?"—"I am no traitor," rejoined Percy; "but a faithful man, and as a faithful man I speak." The King drew his rapier against him. "Not here," said Percy, "but in the field;" and withdrew.

^k Circa festum Sancti Andræ.

LETTER FROM EDMUND MORTIMER TO HIS TENANTS.

"Very dear and well-beloved, I greet you much, and make known to you that Oweyn Glyndor has raised a quarrel, of which the object is, if King Richard be alive, to restore him to his crown; and if not, that my honoured nephew, who is the right heir to the said crown, shall be King of England, and that the said Owen will assert his right in Wales. And I, seeing and considering that the said quarrel is good and reasonable, have consented to join in it, and to aid and maintain it, and, by the grace of God, to a good end. Amen! I ardently hope, and from my heart, that you will support and enable me to bring this struggle of mine to a successful issue. I have moreover to inform you that the lordships of Mellenyth, Werthre-non, Raydre, the commot of Udor, Arwystly, Keveilloe, and Kereynon, are lately come into our possession. Wherefore I moreover entreat you that you will forbear making inroad into my said lands, or to do any damage to my said tenantry, and that you furnish them with provisions at a certain reasonable price, as you would wish that I should treat you; and upon this point be pleased to send me an answer. Very dear and well-beloved, God give you grace to prosper in your beginnings, and to arrive at a happy issue.—Written at Mellenyth, the 13th day of December.

"EDMUND MORTIMER."

"To my very dear and well-beloved M. John Greyndor, Howell Vaughan, and all the gentles and commons of Radnor and Prestremde."¹

Of the Prince himself, between the end of August 1402, and the following spring, little is recorded. In March 1403 he was made Lieutenant of Wales

¹ Cott. Cleop. F. iii. fol. 122, b.

by the King, and with the consent of his council, with full powers of inquiring into offences, of pardoning offenders, of arraying the King's lieges, and of doing all other things which he should find necessary. This appointment, implying personal interference, would lead us to infer, either that he tarried through the winter in the midst of the Principality, or near its borders, or that he returned to it early in the spring.^m To this year also we shall probably be correct in referring the following letter of Prince Henry to the council, dated Shrewsbury, 30th May; but which Sir Harris Nicolas considers to have been written the year before. That it could not have been written by the Prince at Shrewsbury on the 30th of May 1402, seems demonstrable from the circumstance of his having been personally present in the Tower of London on the 8th of May, and of his having executed a deed in the Castle of Tutbury on the 26th of May 1402. Whilst the probability of its having been written in the end of May 1403, is much strengthened by the ordinance of the King, dated June 16, 1403, in which he mentions the reports which he had received from the Prince's council then in Wales of Owyn Glyndowr's intention to invade England; and also by the order made July 10, 1403, by the King,

^m On the 1st of April 1403, the King most earnestly requests loans from bishops, abbots, knights, and others, in the sums severally affixed to their names, to enable him to proceed against the Welsh and the Scots.

that the council would send 1000*l.* to the Prince, to enable him to keep his people together,—the very object chiefly desired in this despatch. The letter is in French.

LETTER FROM PRINCE HENRY TO THE COUNCIL.

“FROM THE PRINCE.

“Very dear and entirely well-beloved, we greet you well. And forasmuch as our soldiers desire to know from us whether they will be paid for the three months of the present quarter, and tell us that they will not remain here without being promptly paid their wages according to their agreements, we beseech you very sincerely that you will order payment for the said months, or supply us otherwise, and take measures in time for the safeguard of these marches. For the rebels are trying to find out every day whether we shall be paid, and they well know that without payment we shall not be able to continue here: and they propose to levy all the power of Northwales and Southwales to make inroads, and to destroy the march and the counties adjoining to it; and we have not the power here of resisting them, so as to hinder them from the full execution of their malicious designs. And when our men are withdrawn from us, we must at all events ourselves retire into England, or be disgraced for ever. For every one must know that without troops we can do no more than another man of inferior rank. And at present we have very great expenses, and we have raised the largest sum in our power to meet them from our little stock of jewels. Our two castles of Harlech and Lampadern are besieged, and have been so for a long time, and we must relieve them and victual them within these ten days; and, besides that, protect the march around us with the third of our forces against the invasion of the rebels. Nevertheless, if this campaign could be continued, the rebels never were so

likely to be destroyed as at present. And now, since we have fully shown the state of these districts, please to take such measures as shall seem best to you for the safety of these same parts, and of this portion of the realm of England; which may God protect, and give you grace to determine upon the best for the time. And our Lord have you in his keeping.—Given under our signet at Shrewsbury, the 30th day of May. And be well assured that we have fully shown to you the peril of whatever may happen hereafter, if remedy be not sent in time.

On this letter it is impossible not to remark that, so far from having an abundant supply of money to squander on his supposed vices and follies, Henry was compelled to pawn his own little stock of plate and jewels to raise money for the indispensable expenses of the war.

The first direct mention made of the Prince after this is found in the ordinance above referred to, dated June 16, 1403, which informs us that he certainly was then in Wales, and strongly implies that he had been there for some time previously. The King says, "I heard from many persons of my son the Prince's council, now in Wales, that Owyn Glyndowr is on the point of making an incursion into England with a great power, for the purpose of obtaining supplies. I therefore command the sheriffs of Gloucester, Salop, Worcester, and Hereford, to make proclamation for all knights, and gentlemen of one hundred shillings' annual income, to go and put themselves under the governance of the Prince." Another letter from Henry to his council,

dated Higham Ferrers, July 10, 1403,ⁿ is deeply interesting, not only as bearing testimony to the persevering bravery of his son Henry, but as affording an example of the uncertainty of human calculations, and the deceitfulness of human engagements and friendships. He informs the council that he had received letters from his son, and information by his messengers, acquainting him with the gallant and good bearing of his very dear and well-beloved son, which gave him very great pleasure. He then commissions them to pay 1000*l*.^o to the Prince for the purpose of enabling him to keep his soldiers together. "We are now," he adds, "on our way to succour our beloved and loyal cousins, the Earl of Northumberland and Henry his son, in the conflict which they have honourably undertaken for us and our realm; and, as soon as that campaign shall have ended honourably, with the aid of God, we will hasten towards Wales."^p

ⁿ The Pell Rolls (July 17, 1403) record the appointment of the Prince as the King's deputy in Wales, to see justice done on all rebels, and the payment of a sum amounting to 8108*l*. 2*s*. 0*d*. for the wages of four barons and bannerets, twenty knights, four hundred and seventy-six esquires, and two thousand five hundred archers.

^o On the next day, July 11, the King issued a proclamation against selling horses, or armour and weapons, to the Welsh.

^p Astonishing confusion pervades almost all our historians as to the circumstances under which Henry IV. first became acquainted with the defection of the Percies, and then hastened to resist their hostilities; and most absurd inferences as to the national interest taken in the ensuing struggle have in consequence been drawn. The King is almost universally

This letter had not been written more than five days when King Henry became acquainted with the rebellion of those, his "beloved and faithful lieges," to assist whom against his northern foes he was then actually on his road. His proclamation for all sheriffs to raise their counties, and hasten to him wherever he might be, is dated Burton-on-Trent, July 16, 1403. On the morrow he sent off a despatch to his council, informing them that Henry Percy, calling him only Henry of Lancaster, was in open rebellion against him, and was spreading far and wide through Cheshire the false rumours that Richard was still alive. He then assures them, "for their consolation," that he was powerful enough to encounter all his enemies; at the same time expressing his pleasure that they should all come to him wherever he might be, except only the Treasurer, whom he wished to stay, for the purpose of collecting as large sums as possible to meet the exigence of the occasion. The Chancellor, on Wednesday, June 18th, met the bearer of these tidings before he reached London, opened the letters, and forwarded them to the council with an apology.^a

represented as having left London, accompanied by all the forces he could, after much preparation, command, for the express purpose of quelling the rebellion of the Percies; whereas he left London for the express purpose of joining his forces to those of the Percies, and to proceed, in conjunction with them, against the Scots; and he had never heard of their defection till he reached Burton-upon-Trent. The news came upon him with the suddenness of an unexpected thunderstorm.

^a Minutes of Privy Council.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE REBELLION OF THE PERCIES, — ITS ORIGIN. — LETTERS OF HOTSPUR, AND THE EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND. — TRIPARTITE INDENTURE BETWEEN THE PERCIES, OWYN, AND MORTIMER. — DOUBTS AS TO ITS AUTHENTICITY. — HOTSPUR HASTENS FROM THE NORTH. — THE KING'S DECISIVE CONDUCT. — HE FORMS A JUNCTION WITH THE PRINCE. — "SORRY BATTLE OF SHREWSBURY." — GREAT INACCURACY OF DAVID HUME. — HARDYNG'S DUPLICITY. — MANIFESTO OF THE PERCIES PROBABLY A FORGERY. — GLYNDOWR'S ABSENCE FROM THE BATTLE INVOLVES NEITHER BREACH OF FAITH NOR NEGLECT OF DUTY. — CIRCUMSTANCES PRECEDING THE BATTLE. — OF THE BATTLE ITSELF. — ITS IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCES.

1403.

IN analysing the motives which drove the Percies, father and son, into rebellion, we are recommended by some writers to search only into those antecedent probabilities, those general causes of mutual dissatisfaction, which must have operated on parties situated as they were with regard to Henry IV. The same authors would dissuade us from seeking for any immediate and proximate causes, because "chroniclers have not discovered or detailed the beginning incidents." But we shall scarcely be able to do justice to our subject if we strictly

follow this prescribed rule of inquiry. The general causes enumerated by Hume, and expatiated upon in modern times, we may take for granted. Undoubtedly ingratitude on the one side, and discontent on the other, were not only to be expected, but, as we know, actually prevailed. "The sovereign naturally became jealous of that power which had advanced him to the throne, and the subject was not easily satisfied in the returns which he thought so great a favour had merited." But we are by no means left to conjecture abstractedly on the "beginning incidents," as the proximate causes of the open revolt of the family of Percy have been called: Hotspur's own letters, as well as those of his father Northumberland, the existence of which seems not to have been known to our historians, prepare us for much of what actually took place. We have already observed the indications of wounded pride, and indignation, and utter discontent, which Hotspur's despatches from Wales evince. Another communication, dated Swyneshed, in Lincolnshire, July 3, is more characteristic of his temper of mind than the preceding, and makes his subsequent conduct still more easily understood.^a Sir

^a The date of this letter is not ascertained; it probably was in the July of 1402. It could scarcely have been in 1401, in which year he was certainly in Wales in June, and was appointed a commissioner for negotiating a peace with Scotland on the 1st of September. In the beginning of July 1403 he was in Wales, or on its borders, negotiating perhaps with Owyn Glyndowr's representatives, and in Cheshire exciting the people to rebellion.

Harris Nicolas has so clearly analysed this letter, that we may well content ourselves with the substance of it as we find it in his valuable preface.

“Hotspur commenced by reminding the council of his repeated applications for payment of the money due to him as Warden of the East March; and then alluded to the other sums owing to his father and himself, and to the promise made by the treasurer, when he was last in London, that, if it were agreeable to the council, 2,000 marks should be paid him before the February then last past. He said he had heard that at the last parliament, when the necessities of the realm were explained by the lords of the great council to the barons and commons, the war allowance was demanded for all the marches, Calais, Guienne and Scotland, the sea, and Ireland; that the proposition for the Scotch marches was limited to 37,000*l.*; and that, as the payment for the marches in time of truce, due to his father and to him, did not exceed 5,000*l.* per annum, it excited his astonishment that it could not be paid in good faith; that it appeared to him either that the council attached too little consideration to the said marches, where the most formidable enemies which they had would be found, or that they were not satisfied with his and his father's services therein; but, if they made proper inquiry, he hoped that the greatest neglect they would discover in the marches was the neglect of payment, without which they would find no one who

could render such service. On this subject he had, he said, written to the King, entreating him that, if any injury occurred to town, castle, or march, in his charge, from default of payment, he might not be blamed; but that the censure should rest on those who would not pay him, agreeably to his Majesty's honourable command and desire. He begged the council not to be displeased that he wrote ignorantly in his rude and feeble manner on this subject, because he was compelled to do so by the necessities not merely of himself, but of his soldiers, who were in such distress, that, without providing a remedy, he neither could nor dared to go to the marches; and he concluded by requesting the council to take such measures as they might think proper."

Two letters from the Earl of Northumberland, the one to the council in May, the other to the King, dated 26th June 1403, breathe the same spirit with those of his son Hotspur, and would have led us to anticipate the same subsequent conduct; at least they ought to have prepared the King and council for the resentments of two such men, overflowing with bitter indignation at the neglect and injustice with which they considered themselves to have been treated.

"The last of these letters (we quote throughout the words of the same Editor) is extremely curious. Northumberland commenced by acknowledging the receipt of a letter from the King, wherein Henry

has expressed his expectation that the Earl would be at Ormeston Castle on the day appointed, and in sufficient force, without creating any additional expense to his Majesty; but that, on consideration, the King, reflecting that this could not be the case without expenses being incurred by the Earl and his son Hotspur, had ordered some money to be speedily sent to them. Of that money the Earl said he knew not the amount, nor the day of payment; that his honour, as well as the state of the kingdom, was in question; and that the day on which he was to be at Ormeston was so near, that, if payment was not soon ordered, it was very probable that the fair renown of the chivalry of the realm would not be maintained at that place, to the utter dishonour and grief of him and of his son, who were the King's loyal subjects; which they believed could not be his wish, nor had they deserved it. 'If,' the Earl sarcastically observed, 'we had both been paid the 60,000*l.* since your coronation, as I have heard you were informed by those who do not wish to tell you the truth, then we could better support such a charge; but to this day there is clearly due to us, as can be fully proved, 20,000*l.* and more.' He then entreated the King to order his council and treasurer to pay him and his son a large sum conformably to the grant made in the last parliament, and to their indentures, so that no injury might arise to the realm by the non-payment of what was due to them.' To this letter he signed

himself 'Your Matathias, who supplicates you to take his state and labour to heart in this affair.' "

There is so much sound reasoning also and good sense in the review of these proceedings, presented to us by the same pen, that we cannot do better than adopt it. The Author's subsequent researches have all tended to confirm that Editor's view :

"This letter preceded the rebellion of the Percies by less than four weeks ; and that event may, it is presumed, be mainly attributed to the inattention shown to their requests of payment of the large sums which they had expended in the King's service. They were not only harassed by debts ; and destitute of means to pay their followers, but their honour, as the Earl expressly told the King, was involved in the fulfilment of their engagements ; a breach of which not only exposed them to the greatest difficulties, but, in the opinion of their chivalrous contemporaries, perhaps affected their reputation. That under these circumstances, and goaded by a sense of injury and injustice, the fiery Hotspur should throw off his allegiance, and revolt, is not surprising ; but it is matter of astonishment that Henry should have hazarded such a result. To the house of Percy he was chiefly indebted for the crown ; and it is scarcely credible that at the moment of their defection it could have been his policy to offend them. The country was at war with France and Scotland, Wales was then in open rebellion, and Henry was far from satisfied-

of the general loyalty of his subjects. Can it be believed that he desired to increase his enemies by adding the most powerful family in the kingdom to the number? Nor can Henry's constant efforts to prevent the people from becoming disaffected, be reconciled with the wish to excite discontent in two of the most influential and distinguished personages in the realm. It is shown in another part of this volume, (Minutes of Privy Council,) that the King had not the slightest suspicion of Hotspur's revolt until it took place; and it appears that, when he heard of it, he was actually on his route to join that chieftain, and, to use his own words to his council, 'to give aid and support to his very dear and loyal cousins, the Earl of Northumberland and his son Henry, in the expedition which they had honourably commenced for him and his realm against his enemies the Scotch.' Instead of refusing to pay to the Percies the money which they claimed, from the desire to lessen their power, or to inflict upon them any species of mortification, all which is known of the state of this country justifies the inference that Henry had the strongest motives for conciliating that family. The neglect of their repeated demands seems, therefore, to have arisen solely from his being unable^b to comply with

^b The fact is, that in the years immediately preceding their defection, the Issue Rolls of the Exchequer abound with items of payment, some to a very large amount, to the Earl of Northumberland and his son. The names of both the father and the son, sometimes separately, often jointly, recur

them ; and the King's pecuniary embarrassments are shown by the documents in this work to have been of so pressing and so permanent a nature, that there is no difficulty in believing such to have been the case. It is deserving of observation, however, that the discontent which is visible in the letters of Hotspur and his father, is as much at the conduct of the council as at that of the King ; and jealousy of their superior influence with Henry, and possibly a suspicion that they endeavoured to injure them in his estimation, as well as to impede their exertions in his service, by withholding the necessary resources, may have combined with other causes in producing their disaffection.”^c

Not Shakspeare only, in his highly-wrought scene at the Archdeacon of Bangor's house, but our historians also and their commentators, instruct us to refer to a point of time very little subsequent to the date of the last letter from the Earl of Northumberland the celebrated **TRIPARTITE INDENTURE**

so constantly that they can scarcely escape the observation even of a cursory glance over the Rolls. Generally the payment is for the protection of the East March and Berwick ; in some instances, for defending the castle of Beaumaris, and the island of Anglesea. On the 17th July 1403, payment is recorded of precisely the same sum to the two Percies for their services in the North March, and to the Prince for the protection of Wales ; in each case, no doubt, falling far short of the requisite amount, but in each case probably as much as the Exchequer could afford to supply.

^c Preface to Sir H. Nicolas's Privy Council of England, p. 4.

OF DIVISION. Shakspeare has traced, with such exquisite designs and shades of colouring, the different characters of the contracting parties in their acts and sentiments, and has thrown such vividness and life and beauty into the whole procedure, that the imagination is led captive, superinducing an unwillingness to doubt the reality; and the mind reluctantly engages in an examination of the truth. But, consistently with the principles adopted in these Memoirs, the Author is compelled to sift the evidence on which the genuineness of the treaty depends. The document, if it could have been established as trustworthy, could not have failed to be interesting to every one as a fact in general history, whilst the English and Welsh antiquary must in an especial manner have been gratified by being made acquainted with its particular provisions. At all events, whatever opinion may be ultimately formed of its character as the vehicle of historical verity, it is in itself too important, and has been too widely recognised, to be passed over in these pages without notice.

Sir Henry Ellis, to whom we are indebted for having first called attention to the specific stipulations of this alleged treaty, with his accustomed perspicuity and succinctness thus introduces the subject to his reader :

“ Sir Edmund Mortimer’s letter is dated December 13 (1402), and the Tripartite Indenture of Partition was not fully agreed upon till toward the

middle of the next year. The negociation for the partition of the kingdom seems to have originated with Mortimer and Glyndowr only. The battle of Shrewsbury was fought on July 21st, 1403. The manuscript chronicle, already named, compiled by one of the chaplains^d to King Henry V, gives the particulars of the final treaty, signed at the house of the Archdeacon of Bangor, more amply than they can be found elsewhere. The expectation declared in this treaty that the contracting parties would turn out to be those spoken of by Merlin, who were to divide amongst them the Greater Britain, as it is called, corroborates the story told by Hall. The whole passage is here submitted to the reader's perusal: the words are evidently those of the treaty." The reader is then furnished with a copy of the Latin original: but, since no point of the general question as to its genuineness appears to be affected by the words employed, the following translation is substituted in its place.

TRIPARTITE INDENTURE OF DIVISION.

"This year, the Earl of Northumberland made a league and covenant and friendship with Owyn Glyndwr and Edmund Mortimer, son of the late Edmund Earl of March, in certain articles of the form and tenor following:—In the first place, that these Lords, Owyn, the Earl, and Edmund, shall henceforth be mutually joined, confederate, united, and

^d That this chronicle was not compiled by one of Henry V.'s chaplains, is shown in the Appendix.

bound by the bond of a true league and true friendship, and sure and good union. Again, that every of these Lords shall will and pursue, and also procure, the honour and welfare one of another ; and shall, in good faith, hinder any losses and distresses which shall come to his knowledge, by any one whatsoever intended to be inflicted on either of them. Every one, also, of them shall act and do with another all and every those things which ought to be done by good, true, and faithful friends to good, true, and faithful friends, laying aside all deceit and fraud. Also, if ever any of the said Lords shall know and learn of any loss or damage intended against another by any persons whatsoever, he shall signify it to the others as speedily as possible, and assist them in that particular, that each may take such measures as may seem good against such malicious purposes ; and they shall be anxious to prevent such injuries in good faith ; also, they shall assist each other to the utmost of their power in the time of necessity. Also, if by God's appointment it should appear to the said Lords in process of time that they are the same persons of whom the Prophet speaks, between whom the government of the Greater Britain ought to be divided and parted, then they and every of them shall labour to their utmost to bring this effectually to be accomplished. Each of them, also, shall be content with that portion of the kingdom aforesaid limited as below, without further exaction or superiority ; yea, each of them in such portion assigned to him shall enjoy equal liberty. Also, between the same Lords it is unanimously covenanted and agreed that the said Owyn and his heirs shall have the whole of Cambria or Wales, by the borders, limits, and boundaries underwritten divided from Leogoed which is commonly called England ; namely, from the Severn sea, as the river Severn leads from the sea, going down to the north gate of the city of Worcester ; and from that gate straight to the ash-trees, commonly called in the Cambrian or Welsh language Ouuene Margion, which grow on the

high way from Bridgenorth to Kynvar; thence by the high way direct, which is usually called the old or ancient way to the head or source of the river Trent; thence to the head or source of the river Meuse; thence as that river leads to the sea, going down within the borders, limits, and boundaries above written. And the aforesaid Earl of Northumberland shall have for himself and his heirs the counties below written, namely, Northumberland, Westmoreland, Lancashire, York, Lincoln, Nottingham, Derby, Stafford, Leicester, Northampton, Warwick, and Norfolk. And the Lord Edmund shall have all the rest of the whole of England entirely to him and his heirs. Also, should any battle, riot, or discord fall out between two of the said Lords, (may it never be!) then the third of the said Lords, calling to himself good and faithful counsel, shall duly rectify such discord, riot, and battle; whose approval or sentence the discordant parties shall be held bound to obey. They shall also be faithful to defend the kingdom against all men; saving the oak on the part of the said Owyn given to the most illustrious Prince Charles, by the grace of God King of the French, in the league and covenant between them made. And that the same be, all and singular, well and faithfully observed, the said Lords, Owyn, the Earl, and Edmund, by the holy body of the Lord which they now stedfastly look upon, and by the holy Gospels of God by them now bodily touched, have sworn to observe the premises all and singular to their utmost, inviolably; and have caused their seals to be mutually affixed thereto."

The above learned Editor of this instrument (to whose labours in rescuing from oblivion so many original documents relative to these times we are repeatedly induced to acknowledge our obligations,) seems to have fallen into some serious mistakes here. Either influenced by the fascinating remi-

niscences of Shakspeare's representations, or following Hall with too implicit a confidence, he has altogether overlooked the date assigned in the manuscript itself to the execution of this partition deed, and the persons between whom the agreement is there said to have been made. So far from countenancing the assumption that "the indenture was finally agreed upon towards the middle of the year next after the date of Edmund Mortimer's letter announcing his junction with Owyn (December 14th, 1402)," the manuscript expressly states that the covenant was made on the 28th of February,* in the fourth year of Henry IV; and that the contracting parties were Henry Earl of Northumberland, Sir Edmund Mortimer, and Owyn Glyndowr. Hall, on whom there exists strong reason for believing that Shakspeare rested as his authority, asserts that the contracting parties were Glyndowr, the LORD PERCY (by which title he throughout designates Hotspur), and the EARL OF MARCH. Hall's expressions would lead us to infer that the circumstance was not generally recog-

* This date cannot have been earlier than February 1404, nor later than 1405. If we interpret the words of the MS. to mean the regnal year of Henry IV, the date will be the first of those two years; if it was the February subsequent to the election of Pope Innocent, October 1404, immediately after noticing which the MS. records this treaty, it will be the latter. The copy of this manuscript agrees in all points with the Sloane, except that it refers it to the 18th instead of the 28th of February.

nised or known by the chroniclers before his time, but was recorded by one only of those with whose writings he was acquainted. "A certain writer," he says, "writeth that this Earl of March, the Lord Percy, and Owyn Glyndowr were unwisely made believe by a Welsh prophesier that King Henry was the Moldwarp cursed of God's own mouth, and that they were the Dragon, the Lion, and the Wolf which should divide the realm between them, by the deviation, not divination, of that mawmet Merlin." Hall then proceeds to tell us that the tripartite indenture was sealed by the deputies of the three parties in the Archdeacon's house; and that, by the treaty, Wales was given to Owyn, all England from Severn and Trent southward and eastward, was assigned to the Earl of March, and the remnant to Lord Percy.

The strange confusion made either by Hall, or "the certain writer" from whom he draws his story, of Owyn's prisoner and son-in-law, Edmund Mortimer, with the Earl of March his nephew, then a minor in the King's safe custody, throws doubtless great suspicion on his narrative; nevertheless, such as it is, (allowing for that mistake,) his account seems far more probable than the statement given in the Sloane manuscript, — the only authority, it is presumed, now known to have reported the alleged words of the treaty. It is much more likely, that the project of dividing South Britain among the houses of Glyndowr,

Mortimer, and Percy, should have been entertained before the battle of Shrewsbury, when the Earl of Worcester's malicious love of mischief might have suggested it, and Hotspur's headstrong impetuosity might have caught at the scheme, and their troops, not yet dispirited by defeat, might have been sanguine of success, than after that struggle, when the old Earl of Northumberland^f was the only representative of the house of Percy who could have signed it. The cause of Owyn, Mortimer, and Northumberland had so sunk into its wane after Hotspur's death, that they could then scarcely have contemplated as a thing feasible the division of the fair realm of England and Wales among themselves. Of the authority of the manuscript from which the indenture is extracted,

^f Nevertheless, it should be remembered that many ancient accounts mention the Earl of Northumberland's visit to Glyndowr subsequently to his return from the flight into Scotland, and that the French auxiliaries invaded England under Glyndowr's standard long after the battle of Shrewsbury. It was on the last day of February 1408, that Rokeby, Sheriff of Yorkshire, compelled Northumberland and Lord Bardolf to engage with him in the field of Bramham Moor, when the Earl fell in battle, and Lord Bardolf died of his wounds. The Earl's head, covered with the snows of age, was exposed on London Bridge. The people lamented his fate when they recalled to mind his former magnificence and glory. Many (says Walsingham) applied to him the lines of Lucan :

Sed nos nec sanguis, nec tantum vulnera nostri
Afficere senis, quantum gestata per urbem
Ora ducis, quæ transfixo deformia pilo
Vidimus.

the Author (for reasons stated in the Appendix) is compelled to form a very low estimate. And if such a deed ever was signed, it is far less improbable that the manuscript (full, as it confessedly is elsewhere, of errors) should have inserted it incorrectly in point of chronological order, than that the contracting parties should have postponed their contemplated arrangement to a period when success must have appeared almost beyond hope. Independently, however, of the suspicion cast on the document by the date assigned to it in the manuscript, it seems to carry with it internal evidence against itself. The contract was made by Edmund Mortimer, the Earl of Northumberland, and Owyn, and among them the land was to be divided; but, so far from the report of such an intended distribution being corroborated by any other authority, there is much evidence to render it incredible. Edmund Mortimer's own genuine letter, for example, announcing his adhesion to Owyn, which preceded this agreement, makes no allusion to the Percies, or even to himself, as portionists. "The cause," he says, "which he espoused would guarantee to Owyn his rights in Wales, and, in case Richard were dead, would place the Earl of March on the throne." It is, indeed, scarcely conceivable that the nobles, the gentry, and the people at large would have suffered their land to be cut up into portions, destroying the integrity of the kingdom, and exposing it with increased facilities

to foreign invasion, and interminable intestine warfare; whilst neither of the three who were to share the spoil had any pretensions of title to the crown. It is scarcely less inconceivable that three men, such as Mortimer, Glyndowr, and Northumberland, could have seriously devised so desperate a scheme.

On the whole, the Author is disposed to express his suspicion that the entire story of the tripartite league is the creature only of invention, originating in some inexplicable mistake, or fabricated for the purpose of exciting feelings of contempt or hostility against the rebels.

In examining the various accounts of the battle of Shrewsbury with a view of putting together ascertained facts in right order, and distinguishing between certainty,—strong probability,—mere surmise,—improbabilities,—and utter mistakes, we shall find it far more easy to point out the errors of others, than to adopt one general view which shall not in its turn be open to objections. Still, in any important course of events, it seems to be a dereliction of duty in an author to shrink from offering the most probable outline of facts which the careful comparison of different statements, and a patient weighing of opposite authorities, suggest. Before, however, we enter upon that task, it will be necessary to clear the way by examining some other questions of doubt and difficulty.

To Mr. Hume's inaccuracies, arising from the want of patient labour in searching for truth at the fountain-head, we have been led to refer above. His readiness to rest satisfied with whatever first offered itself, provided it suited his present purpose, without either scrutinizing its internal evidence, or verifying it by reference to earlier and better authority, is forced upon our notice in his account of the battle of Shrewsbury. Just one half of the entire space which he spares to record the whole affair, he devotes to a minute detail of the manifesto which Hotspur is said to have sent to the King on the night before the battle, in the name of his father, his uncle, and himself. This document, at least in the terms quoted by Mr. Hume, is proved as well by its own internal self-contradictions, as by historical facts, to be a forgery of a much later date.

The first charge which the manifesto is made to bring against Henry is, that, after his landing at Ravenspurgh, he swore on the Gospel that he only sought his own rightful inheritance, that he would never disturb Richard in his possession of the throne, and that never would he aim at being King. And yet another item charges him with having sworn on the same day, and at the same place, and on the same Gospel, an oath (the very terms of which imply that he was to be King) that he never would exact tenths or fifteenths without consent of the three estates, except in cases of extreme emergence. Again, "It complained of his cruel policy (says Mr. Hume, without adding a single remark,) in allowing

the young Earl of March, whom he ought to regard as his sovereign, to remain a captive in the hands of his enemies, and in even refusing to all his friends permission to treat of his ransom;" whilst it is beyond all question that the person whom this pretended manifesto confounds with the Earl of March, "taken in pitched battle," was Sir Edmund Mortimer. The Earl of March was himself then a boy, and was in close custody in Henry's castle of Windsor. The manifesto, as Hume quotes it, is evidently full of historical blunders; its author had followed those historians who had confounded Edmund Mortimer with the Earl of March; and yet Mr. Hume adopts it on the authority of Hall, and gives it so prominent a place in his work.

But even as the manifesto is found in its original form in Hardyng, (though the blunders copied by Hume from Hall^s do not appear there in all their extravagance and absurdity,) something attaches to it exceedingly suspicious as to its character and circumstances. Independently of the internal evidence of the document itself, which will repay a careful scrutiny, the very fact of Hardyng having withheld even the most distant allusion to such a manifesto in the copy of his work which he pre-

^s Hall says, "Because no chronicle save one makes mention what was the cause and occasion of this bloody battle, in the which on both parts were more than forty thousand men assembled, I word for word, according to my copy, do here rehearse." He then gives the heads of the manifesto, from which Hume has drawn his account.

sented to Henry VI, the grandson of the King whose character the manifesto was designed to blast, at a time so much nearer the event, when the reality or the falsehood of his statement might have been more easily ascertained, contrasts very strikingly with the forced and unnatural manner in which, many years after, he abruptly thrusts the manifesto in Latin prose into the midst of his English poem. He then^b desired to please Edward IV, to whom any adverse reflection on Bolinbroke would be acceptable.

The document, however, itself savours strongly of forgery. In the first place, it purports to be signed and sealed by Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, (though the Earl at that time was in Northumberland,) Henry Percy, his first-born son, and Thomas Earl of Worcester, styling themselves Procurators and Protectors of the kingdom. Should this apparent contradiction be thought to be reconciled with the truth by what Hardyng mentions,

^b The fact is, that Hardyng's character is assailable, especially on the point of forging documents. "Several writers have considered Hardyng a most dexterous and notable forger, who manufactured the deed for which he sought reward."ⁱ The first manuscript, the Lansdown, containing no allusion to this said manifesto, comes down to 1436. The Harleian copy, which contains it, comes down to the flight of Henry VI. for Scotland. In the Lansdown copy not one word is said about the oath sworn on Bolinbroke's landing, nor about the manifesto.

ⁱ See Sir H. Ellis's Introduction to his edition of Hardyng.

that the document was made by good advice of the Archbishop of York, and divers other holy men and lords; it must be answered that it could not have been drawn up for the purpose of being used whenever an opportunity might offer, for, in the name of the three, it challenges the King, and declares that they will prove the allegations "*on this day*," "*on this instant day*," twice repeated. Evidently the writer of the document had his mind upon the fatal day of Shrewsbury.

Again, one of their principal charges seems to have emanated from a person totally ignorant of some facts which must have been known to the Percies, and which are established by documents still in our hands. The words of the clause to which we refer run thus: "We aver and intend to prove, that whereas Edmund Mortimer, brother of the Earl of March, was taken by Owyn Glyndowr in mortal battle, in the open field, and has UP TO THIS TIME^j *been cruelly kept in prison* and bands of iron, in your cause, you have publicly declared him to have been guilefully taken, [ex dolo,—willingly, as Hall quotes it, to yield himself prisoner to the said Owyn,] and you would not suffer him to be ransomed, neither by his own means nor by us his relatives and friends. We have, therefore, negociated with Owyn, as well for his ransom from our own proper goods, as also for peace between you and Owyn. Wherefore have you

^j Adhuc.

regarded us as traitors, and moreover have craftily and secretly planned and imagined our death and utter destruction."

This clause of the manifesto declares the King to have publicly proclaimed that Edmund Mortimer, who was taken in pitched battle, had fraudulently given himself up to Owyn. The King's own letter to the council^k is totally irreconcilable with his making such a declaration. He announces to them the news which he had just received of Mortimer's capture, as a calamity which had made him resolve to proceed in person against the rebels. "Tidings have reached us from Wales, that the rebels have taken our very dear and much beloved Edmund Mortimer." Again, the clause avers that the King had suffered the same person, Edmund Mortimer, to be kept cruelly in prison and iron chains *up to that time*, and would not suffer him to be ransomed. In contradiction to this charge, we are assured by the early chroniclers¹ that Owyn treated Mortimer with all the humanity and respect in his power; and that because he possessed not the means of paying a ransom, he had, as early as St. Andrew's day, (30th of November 1402, less than six months after his capture, and nearly eight months before the alleged delivery of the manifesto,) been married to

^k Acts of Council, vol. i. p. 185.

¹ Monk of Evesham and Sloane, 1776.—In the passage relating to Mortimer's marriage in Walsingham's history, the word "obiit" is evidently an interpolation by mistake. It does not occur in the corresponding passage in his Ypodig. Neust.

the daughter of Owyn with great solemnity; and, "thus turning wholly to the Welsh people, he pledged himself thereafter to fight for them to the utmost of his power against the English."

Another expression in this clause, incompatible with the truth, but quite consistent with the mistakes which from very early times prevailed as to the circumstances preceding the battle of Shrewsbury, charges the King with having pronounced the three Percies to be traitors, and with having secretly planned and imagined their ruin and death; and this is said to have been signed and sealed by Northumberland, then remaining in the north. Whereas the truth, established beyond controversy, though little known, is, that, up to the very day when the King announced to the council Hotspur's rebellion,—barely four days before the battle,—he had entertained no idea of their disloyalty. Even in his last preceding despatch he informed the council that he was on his way "to afford aid and comfort to his very dear and faithful cousins, the Earl of Northumberland and his son Henry, and to join them in their expedition against the Scots."^m

These considerations, among others, throw so many and such weighty suspicions on the manifesto, that it can scarcely be regarded as deserving of credit. Nor must the Author here disguise his conviction, that the whole is a forgery, guiltily made for the purpose of blackening the memory of

^m Acts of Council, vol. i. p. 207.

Henry IV, and of casting odium on the dynasty of the house of Lancaster.

Another important mistake into which tradition seems to have betrayed some very pains-taking persons is that which charges Owyn Glyndowr with a breach of faith, and a selfish conduct, on the occasion of the battle of Shrewsbury, utterly unworthy of any man of the slightest pretensions to integrity and honour. He is said by Leland to have promised Percy to be present at that struggle: he is reported by Pennant to have remained, as if spell-bound, with twelve thousand men at Oswestry. The History of Shrewsbury tells us of the still existing remains of an oak at Shelton, into the topmost branches of which he climbed to see the turn of the battle, resolving to proceed or retire as that should be; having come with his forces to that spot time enough to join the conflict. The question involving Owyn Glyndowr's good faith and valour, or zeal and activity, is one of much interest, and deserves to be patiently investigated; whilst an attentive examination of authentic documents, and a careful comparison of dates, are essential to the establishment of the truth. The result of the inquiry may be new, and yet not on that account the less to be relied upon.

That Owyn gladly promised to co-operate with the Percies, there is every reason to regard as true; that he undertook to be with them at Shrewsbury on that day of battle cannot, it should seem, be true. Probably he never heard of any

expectation of such an engagement, and the first news which reached him relating to it may have been tidings of Percy's death, and the discomfiture of his troops. The Welsh historians unsparingly charge him with having deceived his northern friends on that day: and some assert that he remained at Oswestry, only seventeen miles off; others that he came to the very banks of the Severn, and tarried there in safety, consulting only his own interest, whilst a vigorous effort on his part might have turned the victory that day against the King. This is, perhaps, within the verge of possibility; but is in the highest degree improbable. That the reports have originated in an entire ignorance of Owyn's probable position at the time, and of the sudden, unforeseen, and unexpected character of the struggle to which Bolinbroke's instantaneous decision forced the Percies, will evidently appear, if, instead of relying on vague tradition, we follow in search of the reality where facts only, or fair inferences from ascertained facts, may conduct us.

It appears, then, to be satisfactorily demonstrable by original documents, interpreted independently of preconceived theory, that, four days only before King Henry's proclamation against the Percies was issued at Burton upon Trent, Owyn Glyndowr was in the extreme divisions of Caermarthenshire, most actively and anxiously engaged in reducing the English castles which still held out against him, and by no means free from formidable

antagonists in the field, being fully occupied at that juncture, and likely to be detained there for some time. It must be also remembered that the King published his proclamation as soon as ever he had himself heard of Hotspur's movements from the north, and that even his knowledge of the hostile intentions of the Percies preceded the very battle itself only by the brief space of five days. This circumstance has never (it is presumed) been noticed by any of our historians; and the examination of the whole question involves so new and important a view of the affairs of the Principality at that period, and bears so immediately on the charge made against the great rebel chieftain for dastardly cowardice or gross breach of faith, that it seems to claim in these volumes a fuller and more minute investigation than might otherwise have been desirable or generally interesting. The documents furnishing the facts on which we ground our opinion, are chiefly original letters preserved in the British Museum, and made accessible to the general reader by having been published by Sir Henry Ellis.ⁿ That excellent Editor, however, has unquestionably referred them to an earlier date than can be truly assigned to them.^o Independently of the material fact which they are intended to establish, they carry with them much intrinsic interest

ⁿ Original Letters, Second Series.

^o Those documents, with the Author's remarks and reasonings upon them, will be found in the Appendix.

of their own; and although the detail of the evidence in the body of the work might seem to impede unnecessarily the progress of the narrative, the dissertation in its detached form is recommended to the reader's careful perusal. Should he close his examination of those documents under the same impression which the Author confesses they have made on himself, he will acquiesce in the conclusion above stated, and consider this position as admitting no reasonable doubt,—That, a few days only before the fatal battle of Shrewsbury, Owyn Glyndowr was in the very extremity of South Wales, engaged in attempts to reduce the enemy's garrisons, and crush his power in those quarters; with a prospect also before him of much similar employment in a service of great danger to himself. And when we recollect that probably Henry Percy as little expected the King to meet him at Shrewsbury, as the King a week before had thought to find him or his father in any other part of the kingdom than in Northumberland, whither he was himself on his march to join them; when we recollect the nature and extent of the country which lies between Pembrokeshire and Salop; and reflect also on the undisciplined state of Owyn's "eight thousand and eight score spears, such as they were;" instead of being surprised at his absence from Shrewsbury on the 21st of July, and charging him with having deserted his friends and sworn allies on that sad field, we are driven to believe that his presence there would have

savoured more of the marvellous than many of his most celebrated achievements. The simple truth breaks the spell of the poet's picture, and forces us to unveil its fallacy, though it has been pronounced by the historian of Shrewsbury to "form one of the brightest ornaments of the pages of *Marmion*." To whatever cause we ascribe the decline of Owyn's power, we cannot trace its origin to a judicial visitation as the consequence of his failure in that hour of need. The poet's imagination, creative of poetical justice, wrought upon the tale as it was told; but that tale was not built on truth. The lines, however, deserve to have been the vehicle of a less ill-founded tradition.

"E'en from the day when chained by fate,
By wizard's dream or potent spell,
Lingering from sad Salopia's field,
Reft of his aid, the Percy fell;—
E'en from that day misfortune still,
As if for violated faith,
Pursued him with unwearied step,
Vindictive still for Hotspur's death." ^p

Those who feel an interest in tracing the localities of this battle with a greater minuteness of detail in its circumstances than is requisite for the purpose of these *Memoirs*, will do well to consult the "*Historian of Shrewsbury*." The following is offered as the probable outline of the circumstances

^p Quoted by Scott in his *Notes on Marmion* from a poem by the Rev. G. Warrington, called "*The Spirit's Blasted Tree*."

of the engagement, together with those which preceded and followed it.

The Earl of Northumberland and his son Hotspur were engaged in collecting and organizing troops in the north, for the professed purpose of invading Scotland as soon as the King should join them with his forces. Taking from these troops "eight score horse," Hotspur^a marched southward

^a Hardyng represents the variance between Henry IV. and the Percies to have originated in three causes:—in their own refusal to give up certain prisoners of rank who had been taken at the battle of Homildon; in the King's refusal to let Sir Edmund Mortimer pay a ransom; and in the displeasure which the King had felt in consequence of an interview between Hotspur and Glyndowr, which had excited his suspicions. A commission was issued on the 14th March 1403, at the instance of the Earl of Westmoreland, to inquire about the prisoners taken at Homildon or "Humbledon."—Rym. Fœd. The Pell Rolls acquaint us with the great importance attached by Henry and the nation to this victory, by recording the pension assigned to the first bringer of the welcome news: "To Nicholas Merbury 40*l.* yearly for other good services, as also because the same Nicholas was the first person who reported for a certainty to the said lord the King the good, agreeable, and acceptable news of the success of the late expedition at Homeldon, near Wollor, in Northumberland, by Henry, late Earl of Northumberland. Four earls, many barons and bannerets, with a great multitude of knights and esquires, as well Scotch as French, were taken; and also a great multitude slain, and drowned in the river Tweed." This act of gratitude was somewhat late, if the entry in the Roll records the first payment. It is dated Nov. 3, 1405. At the date of this payment Percy is called the *late* Earl, because he had forfeited his title.

from Berwick at their head, and came through Lancashire and Cheshire, spreading his rebellious principles on every side, and adding to his army, especially from among the gentry. He proclaimed everywhere that their favourite Richard, though deposed by the tyranny of Bolinbroke, was still alive; and many gathered round his standard, resolved to avenge the wrongs of their liege lord. The King, with a considerable force, the amount of which is not precisely known, was on his march towards the north, with the intention of joining the forces raised by the Percies, and of advancing with them into Scotland, and, "that expedition well ended," of returning to quell the rebels in Wales. He was at Burton on Trent when news was brought to him of Hotspur's proceedings, which decided him^r instantly to grapple with this unlooked-for rebellion. Hotspur was believed to be on his road to join Glyndowr, and the King resolved to intercept him.

So far from inferring, as some authors have done, from the smallness of the numbers on either side, that the country considered it more a personal quarrel between two great families than as a national concern, we might rather feel surprise at the

^r Walsingham records that the Earl of Dunbar, urging Henry to strike an immediate blow, quoted Lucan. He probably uttered the sentiment, — the quotation being supplied by the chronicler :

"Tolle moras ; nocuit semper differre paratis,
Dum trepidant nullo firmatæ robore partes."

magnitude of the body of men which met in the field of Shrewsbury.^s It must be remembered that the King did not "go down" from the seat of government with 14,000 men; but that the army with which he hastened to crush the rising rebellion consisted only of the troops at the head of whom he was marching towards the north, of the body then under the Prince of Wales on the borders, and of those who could be gathered together on the exigence of the moment by the royal proclamation. It must be borne also in mind that (according to all probability) barely four days elapsed between the first intimation which reached the King's ears of the rebellion of the Percies, and the desperate conflict which crushed them. As we have already seen, the King, only on the 10th of July, (scarcely eleven days before that decisive struggle,) believed himself to be on his road northward to join "his beloved and loyal" Northumberland and Hotspur against the Scots.

The Prince of Wales, who, as we infer, first apprised the King of this rising peril, was on the Welsh borders, near Shrewsbury; and he formed a junction with his father,—but where, and on what day, is not known. Very probably the first

^s Mr. Pennant, in his interesting account of Owyn Glyn-dowr's life, (though he appears to have been very diligent in collecting traditionary materials for the work,) represents King Henry to have "made an expeditious march to Burton on Trent, on his way *against the northern rebels,*" *the Percies*; when, on hearing of Hotspur having come southward, he turned to meet him.

intimation that Henry of Monmouth himself had of the hostile designs of the Percies, was the sudden departure of the Earl of Worcester, his guardian, who unexpectedly left the Prince's retinue, and, taking his own dependents with him, joined Hotspur.

At all events, delay would have added every hour to the imminent peril of the royal cause, and probably Hotspur's impetuosity seconded the King's manifest policy of hastening an immediate engagement; and thus the "sorry battle of Shrewsbury" was fought by the united forces of the King and the Prince on the one side, and the forces of Hotspur and his uncle the Earl of Worcester on the other, unassisted by Glyndowr.

That the opposed parties engaged in "Heyteley Field,"[†] near that town, is placed beyond question. With regard to their relative position immediately before the battle, there is no inconsiderable doubt. Some say that the King's army reached the town and took possession of the castle on the Friday, only three hours before Hotspur arrived: others,

[†] That the battle was fought in Hateley Field is proved by a document containing a grant by patent (10 Hen. IV.) of two acres of land for ever to Richard Huse (Hussey), Esquire, for two chaplains to chant mass for the prosperity of the King during his life, and for his soul afterwards, and for all his progenitors, and for the souls of them who died in that battle and were there interred, and for the souls of all Christians, in a new chapel to be built on the ground. See Sir Harris Nicolas' preface to vol. i. p. 53.

following Walsingham, represent Hotspur as having arrived first, and being in the very act of assaulting the town, when the sudden, unexpected appearance of the royal banner advancing made him desist from that attempt, and face the King's forces. Be this as it may, on Saturday the 21st of July, the two hostile armies were drawn up in array against each other in Hateley Field, ready to rush to the struggle on which the fate of England was destined much to depend. Whether any manifesto were sent from Hotspur, or not, it is certain that the King made an effort to prevent the desperate conflict, and the unnecessary shedding of so much Christian blood. He despatched the Abbot of Shrewsbury and the Clerk of the Privy Seal to Hotspur's lines, with offers of pardon even then, would they return to their allegiance. Hotspur was much moved by this act of grace, and sent his uncle, the Earl of Worcester, to negotiate. This man has been called the origin of all the mischief; and he is said so to have addressed the King, and so to have misinterpreted his mild and considerate conversation, "who condescended, in his desire of reconciliation, even below the royal dignity," that both parties were incensed the more, and resolved instantly to try their strength. The onset was made by the archers of Hotspur, whose tremendous volleys caused dreadful carnage among the King's troops. "They fell," says Walsingham, "as the leaves fall on the ground after a frosty night

at the approach of winter. There was no room for the arrows to reach the ground, every one struck a mortal man." The King's bowmen also did their duty. A rumour, spreading through the host, that the King had fallen, shook the steadiness and confidence of his partisans, and many took to flight; the royal presence, however, in every part of the engagement soon rallied his men. Hotspur and Douglas seemed anxious to fight neither with small nor great, but with the King only;" though they mowed down his ranks, making alleys, as in a field of corn, in their eagerness to reach him. He was, we are told, unhorsed again and again; but returned to the charge with increased impetuosity. His standard-bearer was killed at his side, and the standard thrown down. At length the Earl of Dunbar forced him away from the post which he had taken. Henry of Monmouth, though he was then no novice in martial deeds, yet had never before been engaged on any pitched-battle field; and here he did his duty valiantly. He was wounded in the face by an arrow; but, so far from allowing himself to be removed on that account to a place of safety, he urged his friends to lead him into the very hottest of the conflict. Elmham records his address: whether they are the very

" The story that Henry adopted the unchivalrous expedient of fighting in disguise, arraying several persons, especially the Earl of Stafford and Sir Walter Blount, in royal armour, seems altogether fabulous.

words he uttered, or such only as he was likely to have used, they certainly suit his character: "My lords, far be from me such disgrace, as that, like a poltroon, I should stain my noviciate in arms by flight. If the Prince flies, who will wait to end the battle? Believe it, to be carried back before victory would be to me a perpetual death! Lead me, I implore you, to the very face of the foe. I may not say to my friends, 'Go ye on first to the fight.' Be it mine to say, 'Follow me, my friends.'" The next time we hear of Henry of Monmouth is as an agent of mercy. The personal conflict between him and Hotspur, into the description of which Shakspeare has infused so full a share of his powers of song, has no more substantial origin than the poet's own imagination. Percy fell by an unknown hand, and his death decided the contest. The cry, "Henry Percy is dead!" which the royalists raised, was the signal for utter confusion and flight.^x The number of the slain on either side is differently reported. When the two armies met, the King's was superior in numbers, but Hotspur's far more abounded in gentle blood. The greater part of the gentlemen of Cheshire fell on that day. On the King's part,^y except the

^x The Scots fled, the Welshmen ran, the traitors were overcome; then neither woods letted, nor hills stopped, the fearful hearts of them that were vanquished.—Hall.

^y Hume says, most unadvisedly, "the persons of greatest distinction who fell on that day were on the King's side."

Earl of Stafford and Sir Walter Blount, few names of note are reckoned among the slain.

The Earl of Worcester, Lord Douglas, and Sir Richard Vernon, fell into the hands of the King; they were kept prisoners till the next Monday, when Worcester and Vernon were beheaded. The Earl's head was sent up to London on the 25th (the following Wednesday), by the bearer of the royal mandate, commanding it to be placed upon London bridge.

Thus ended the "sad and sorry field of Shrewsbury."² The battle appeared to be the archetype of

² The Pell Rolls, so called from the pells, or skins, on rolls of which accounts of the royal receipts and expenditure used to be kept, are preserved both in the Chapter House of Westminster, and also in duplicate at the Exchequer Office in Whitehall. The Author had every facility afforded him of examining them at his leisure; and doubtless these documents contain much valuable information, throwing light as well on the national affairs of the times to which they belong, as on the more private history of monarchs and people. This is evident to every one on inspecting the records of any one year. But at the same time they read a lesson, clear and sound, on the indispensable necessity of constant care, and circumspection, and sifting scrutiny, before reliance be placed on them as evidence conclusive, and beyond appeal. The Author of these Memoirs entered upon an examination of the original documents, fully aware that the date of payment with reference to any fact could never be adduced in evidence that the event took place at the time the entry was made, but only that it had taken place before that time. Thus, a debt due to the Prince, or one in command under him, at the siege of a castle in Wales, or to tradesmen and merchants for supplying the forces with provisions, or to messengers sent with all speed

that cruel conflict which in the middle of the century almost annihilated the ancient nobility of England. Fabyan says, "it was more to be noted vengeable, for there the father was slain of the son, and the son of the father."

bearing despatches to the castle during the siege, might remain unpaid for several years. He was, however, at the same time under an impression that the sum was recorded on the day of payment; at all events, that payments with reference to any insulated fact could not have been recorded as having been made before that fact had transpired. In both these points, however, he was mistaken. Payments were registered not only long after the day on which they were made, but absolutely *before the event had taken place* to which they refer, and which could not have been anticipated by any human foresight. Thus, not only is payment recorded as having been made to Hotspur nearly five months after his death, and to the Earl of Worcester, twelve weeks after he was beheaded, for expenses incurred by him in bringing the King's consort from Brittany to England in the January preceding, but absolutely the payment of messengers sent throughout the kingdom to announce Henry Percy's death and the defeat of the rebels near Shrewsbury, and to order all ferries and passages to be watched to prevent the escape of the rebels, is recorded as having been made on the 17th of July 1403, FOUR DAYS BEFORE THE BATTLE TOOK PLACE, and the very day on which the King wrote to his council, informing them of the rebellion, before he could himself possibly have anticipated the place or time of any engagement, much less the successful issue of such a struggle with the rebels. The fact is, these accounts were not kept with the regularity of a modern banking-house; and the entries of what may have been omitted were made at the audits, from rough minutes and account-books. Thus mistakes as to the date of actual payment probably were not rare. The Pell Rolls are useful assistants; they must not be followed implicitly as guides.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PRINCE COMMISSIONED TO RECEIVE THE REBELS INTO ALLEGIANCE.—THE KING SUMMONS NORTHUMBERLAND.—HOTSPUR'S CORPSE DISINTERRED.—THE REASON.—GLYNDOWR'S FRENCH AUXILIARIES.—HE STYLES HIMSELF "PRINCE OF WALES."—DEVASTATION OF THE BORDER COUNTIES.—HENRY'S LETTERS TO THE KING, AND TO THE COUNCIL.—TESTIMONY OF HIM BY THE COUNTY OF HEREFORD.—HIS FAMOUS LETTER FROM HEREFORD.—BATTLE OF GROSSMONT.

1403—1404.

No sooner had the King gained the field of Shrewsbury than he took the most prompt measures to extinguish what remained of the rebellion of the Percies. On the very next day he issued a commission to the Earl of Westmoreland, William Gascoigne, and others, for levying forces to act against the Earl of Northumberland. That nobleman, as we have seen, remained in the north, probably in consequence of a sudden attack of illness, when Hotspur made his ill-fated descent into the south: but the King had good reason to believe that he was still in arms against the crown; and although he despatched that commission of array to the Earl

of Westmoreland within only a few hours of the battle, yet he resolved to march forthwith in person,^a and crush the rebellion by one decisive blow. On Monday the 23rd, the Earl of Worcester was beheaded; and on the same day all his silver vessels, forfeited to the King, were given to the Prince.^b On the Tuesday the King must have started for the north; for we find two ordinances dated at Stafford, a distance of thirty miles from Shrewsbury, on Wednesday the 25th. Whilst one of these royal mandates savours of severity, the other not only is the message of mercy and forgiveness, but recommends itself to us from the consideration of the person to whom the exercise of the royal clemency was intrusted with unlimited discretion. Henry of Monmouth, perhaps, left Shrewsbury after the battle, and proceeded with his father on his journey northward; but we conclude Stafford to have been, at all events, the furthest point from the Principality to which he accompanied him. Whether the measure of mercy originated with the King or the Prince, certainly both the King believed that his son would gladly execute the commission, and the Prince felt happy

^a Sir Harris Nicolas, in his very valuable preface to the first volume of the Acts of the Privy Council, has fallen into the most extraordinary mistake of stating that the King, after the battle of Shrewsbury, "remained in or near Wales until November." He was certainly absent through six full weeks on his northern expedition. The same Editor more than once affirms that the battle of Shrewsbury was fought on the 23rd of July.

^b MS. Donat. 4597.

in being made the royal representative in the exercise of a monarch's best and holiest prerogative. An ordinance was made by the King at Stafford, investing the Prince of Wales with full powers to pardon the rebels who were in the company of Henry Percy. The Prince probably remained in or near Shrewsbury for the discharge of the duties assigned to him by this commission. The King, having despatched messengers throughout the whole realm announcing Henry Percy's death and the defeat of the rebels, and commanding all ports to be watched that none of the vanquished might escape, proceeded northward. On the 4th of August we find him at Pontefract, from which place he issued an order to the Sheriff^c of York, which certainly indicates anything rather than a thirst of vengeance on his enemies. It appears that many persons, reckless of justice and confident of impunity, had laid violent hands on the goods of the rebels; and different families had thus been subjected to most grievous spoliation. The King's ordinance conveys a peremptory order to the Sheriff of Yorkshire to interpose his authority, and prevent such acts of violence and wrong, even

^c Mr. Morritt of Rokeby, in a letter to Sir Walter Scott, (*Life of Scott*, vol. ii. p. 387,) says, "In the time of Henry IV. the High Sheriff of Yorkshire who overthrew Northumberland, and drove him to Scotland after the battle of Shrewsbury, was a Rokeby. Tradition says that this Sheriff was before an adherent of the Percies, and was the identical knight who dissuaded Hotspur from the enterprise, on whose letter the angry warrior comments so freely in Shakspeare."

upon the King's enemies. On the 6th, we find him still at Pontefract, and again on the 14th. Official documents, without supplying any matter which needs detain us here, account for him through the intervening days. Walsingham also relates that the King proceeded to York, and summoned the whole county of Northumberland to appear before him. The Earl, who had started with a strong body a few days after the battle, either in ignorance of his son's failure, or to meet the King for the purpose of treating with him for peace, had been resisted by the Earl of Westmoreland, and compelled to retire to Warkworth. On receiving the King's summons, leaving the commonalty behind, he approached the royal presence with a small retinue, and, in the humble guise of a suppliant, besought forgiveness.^d The King granted him full pardon, on the 11th of August;^e and then began his return towards Wales. We find him, from the 14th to the 16th,^f at Pontefract; on the 17th, at Doncaster. On

^d His friends and retainers spread strange reports throughout the north, of the King's death; and, assembling in great force, held the castles of Berwick, Alnwick, and Warkworth against the royal authority. The Earl of Westmoreland, Warden of the West March, therefore requested to be supplied with cannon and other means of assault to reduce these fortresses. The proceedings are given in detail among the Acts of the Privy Council, but do not call for a minute examination here.

^e Walsingham says expressly, it was on the morrow of St. Lawrence, August 11th.

^f On the 15th, he issues a proclamation for an array, to

the 18th, at Worksop; on the 26th, at Woodstock; and on the 8th of September, at Worcester.^c

After these acts of grace and pardon to Lord Douglas, Northumberland, and all others who were joined to Sir Henry Percy, we should not expect to find a charge substantiated of wanton and brutal cruelty and vengeance on the part of the King against the corpse of that gallant knight. Such a charge, however, is brought in the most severe terms which language can supply in the manifesto said to have been made by the Archbishop of York. The fact of Hotspur's exhumation may be granted, and yet the King's memory may remain free from such a charge.^h That the body was buried, and afterwards disinterred and exposed to public view, seems not to admit of a doubt. As it appears from the Chronicle of London, "Persons reported that Percy was yet alive. He was therefore taken up out of the grave, and bound upright between two mill-stones, that all men might see that he was dead." "The cause of Hotspur's exhumation is

meet him at Worcester, on the 3rd of September at the latest, to proceed against Owyn.

^c It was on his return towards Wales that the military recommended Henry (then much in need of money) to take from the bishops their horses and gold, and send the prelates home on foot. The Archbishop resisted the outrage in a manly speech; and the King prayed a benevolence, which the clergy granted.

^h The King, speaking of the death of Hotspur, merely says, "He hath gone the way of all flesh."—Rot. Pat. 4 Hen. IV. p. 2.

therefore satisfactorily explained; and, since it must have been very desirable to remove all doubt as to the fact of his death, the charge of needless barbarity which has been brought against the King for disinterring him is without foundation.”ⁱ

The King now adopted prompt and vigorous measures for the suppression of the rebellion in Wales; and with that view issued from Worcester an ordinance to several persons by name, to keep their castles in good repair, well provided also with men and arms. Among others, the Bishop of St. David's is strictly charged as to his castle of Laghadyn; Nevill de Furnivale, for Goodrich; Edward Charleton of Powis, for Caerleon and Usk; John Chandos, for Snowdon. On the 10th of September, the King, still at Worcester, created his son, John of Lancaster, Constable of England. On the 14th he was at Hereford,^k when he gave a warrant to William Beauchamp, (to whom was intrusted the care of Abergavenny and Ewias Harold,) to receive into their allegiance the Welsh rebels of those lordships. A similar warrant for the rebels of Brecknock, Builth, Haye, with others, is given, on the 15th, to Sir John Oldcastle, John ap Herry, and John Fairford, clerk, dated Devennock. The King was then on his route towards Caermarthen,^l where he stayed only

ⁱ Sir Harris Nicolas.

^k On the 12th, he had issued a proclamation from Hereford for his lieges to meet him there forthwith.

^l Caermarthen suffered very seriously in this war: the Pell Rolls, June 26, 1406, record the payment of a sum to the Bur-

a short time; and left the Earl of Somerset, Sir Thomas Beaufort, the Bishop of Bath, and Lord Grey to keep the castle and town for one month. He shortly afterwards commissioned Prince Henry to negotiate with those persons for their pardon who had been excepted from the act of oblivion after the battle of Shrewsbury.^m

The Welsh, though driven probably from Caermarthenshireⁿ in the early part of this autumn, seem to have carried on their hostilities in other districts with much vigour into the very middle of winter.^o

gesses and Goodmen of Caermarthen, in mitigation of the losses they had sustained. On this occasion the King arrived there on the 25th and stayed till the 29th.

^m On the 2nd of October, the King issued a proclamation against Owyn. He seems to have returned through Gloucester to London, immediately after the 17th October; on which day a warrant to Robert Waterton, to arrest Elizabeth wife of the late Henry Percy, is dated Gloucester.

On the 8th of October, those four persons whom Henry had left in charge of Caermarthen, implore the council by letter to send the Duke of York, or some other general, to take charge of the King's interests in that district, and to furnish troops to succeed those whom the King had left in trust there, since they had expressed their determined resolution not to remain beyond their month.

ⁿ On the 1st of December the King acknowledges that the people of Kedwelly had repaired their walls which Owyn had injured; and, on the 19th, the castle of Llanstaffan is given to the custody of David Howell, who undertook to defend it with ten men-at-arms and twenty archers at his own expense, the late captain having been taken by Owyn.

^o On the 26th of October, the King commissions the Earl of Devon, with the Courtenays and others, to press as many men as might be necessary wherever they were to be found, and to

On the 8th of November, the King, being then at Cirencester, issued strict orders for the payment of 100*l.* to Lord Berkeley, for the succour of the garrison of Llanpadarn Castle, then straitly besieged by the rebels, and in great danger of falling into their hands. Lord Berkeley was appointed Admiral of the Fleet to the westward of the Thames, on the 5th of November 1403.

On the 22d of November the King issued a proclamation for all rebels to apply for an amnesty before the Feast of the Epiphany next ensuing, or in default thereof to expect nothing but the strict course of the law.

It is matter of doubt whether Prince Henry remained in Wales and the borders through the winter, or returned to his charge in the spring. On the opening of the campaign, however, in 1404, we find the Welsh chieftain aided by a power which must have made his rebellion far more formidable than it had hitherto been. A truce between England and France had been concluded just before the battle of Shrewsbury, but it was of very short duration. Early in the spring, the French appeared off the shores of Wales in armed vessels, and in conjunction with Glyndowr's forces, laid siege to several castles along the coast. As early as April 23rd, a sum of 300*l.* is assigned by the council for equipping with men and arms, provisions and stores,

proceed forthwith by sea to rescue the castle of Caerdiff, then in great peril.

five vessels in the port of Bristol, to relieve the castles of Aberystwith and Cardigan, and to compel the French to raise the siege of Caernarvon and Harlech.^p Not only were the castles on the coast brought into increased jeopardy by this accession of a continental force to Owyn's army of native rebels, but the inhabitants of the interior, already miserably plundered, and in numberless cases utterly ruined, by the ravages of the Welsh, now began to give themselves up to despair. A letter from the King's loyal subjects of Shropshire (which we must refer to this spring), praying for immediate succour against the confederate forces of Wales and France, furnishes a most deplorable view of the state of those districts. One-third part of that county, they say, had been already destroyed, whilst the inhabitants were compelled to leave their homes, in order to obtain their living in other more favoured parts of the realm. The petition prays for the protection of men-at-arms and archers, till the Prince^q himself should come.

^p Measures had been taken, in expectation, as it should appear, of these sieges. January 31, 1404, money is paid to the Prince to purchase sixty-six pipes of honey (to make mead), twelve casks of wine, four casks of sour wine, fifty casks of wheat-flour, and eighty quarters of salt, for victualling Caernarvon, Harlech, Llanpadarn, and Cardigan.

^q From this expression, Sir Harris Nicolas is induced to refer the letter (which is dated April 21st) to the year 1403, the Prince having been appointed Lieutenant of Wales on the 7th of March preceding. But the mention of the *French* auxiliaries, who appear not to have visited those parts till the

Soon after the French had carried on these hostile movements, their King made a solemn league with Owyn Glyndowr, as an independent sovereign, acknowledging him to be Prince of Wales. Owyn dated his principedom from the year 1400, and assumed the full title and authority of a monarch.^r In this year he commissioned Griffin Young his chancellor, and John Hangmer, both “his beloved relatives,” to treat with the King of France, in consideration of the affection and sincere love which that illustrious monarch had shown *towards him and his subjects.*^s This commission is dated “Doleguelli, 10th May, A. D. 1404, and in the fourth year of our principality.” In conformity with its tenour, a league was made and sworn to between the ambassadors of “*our illustrious and most dread lord, Owyn, Prince of Wales,*” and those of the King of France. That sovereign signed the com-

year following, seems to fix the date of this document to the year 1404.

^r Owyn does not, however, seem to have exercised the princely prerogative of coining money. Indeed, no Welsh coin of any date is known to have been ever in existence. Thomas Thomas, the Welsh antiquary, says that a coin (or Dr. Stukeley’s impression from a coin) of King Bleiddyd is now in the Cotton museum, of a date above nine hundred years before Christ; and that there are others of Monagan about the year one hundred and thirty before the Christian era. A search for them, it is presumed, would be fruitless.

^s The words in italics are in the original “*erga nos et subditos nostros.*” “*Illustris et metuendissimi domini nostri Owini Principis Walliarum.*”—See Rymer.

mission on the 14th of June; and the league was sealed in the chancellor's house at Paris, on the 14th July. Its provisions are chiefly directed against "Henry of Lancaster."

The reinforcements which Owyn Glyndowr received from France at the opening of the campaign in the spring of 1404, enabled him not only to lay siege to the castles in North and West Wales (as it was called), but to make desperate inroads into England, as well about Shropshire as in Herefordshire. A letter addressed to the council, June 10th, by the sheriff, the receiver, and other gentlemen of the latter county, conveys a most desponding representation of the state of those parts; especially through the district of Archenfield. The bearer of this letter was the Archdeacon of Hereford, Dean of Windsor, the same person who wrote in such "haste and dread" to the King the year before. Some parts of this letter deserve to be transcribed, they afford so lively a description of the frightful calamities of a civil war. "The Welsh rebels in great numbers have entered Irchonfeld,^t which is a division of the county of Hereford, and there they have burnt houses, killed the inhabitants, taken prisoners, and

^t Irchonfeld, now called Archenfield, contains some of the most fertile land in Herefordshire. The inhabitants of Whitchurch, in that district, used to say, before modern luxury had taught us to reckon foreign productions among the necessities of life, that, excepting salt, their parish supplied whatever was needed for their subsistence in comfort.

ravaged the country, to the great dishonour of our King, and the insupportable damage of the county. We have often advertised the King that such mischiefs would befall us. We have also now certain information that within the next eight days the rebels are resolved to make an attack in the March of Wales, to its utter ruin if speedy succour be not sent. True it is, indeed, that we have no power to shelter us, except that of Lord Richard of York and his men, far too little to defend us. We implore you to consider this very perilous and pitiable case, and to pray our sovereign lord that he will come in his royal person, or send some person with sufficient power to rescue us from the invasion of the aforesaid rebels; otherwise we shall be utterly destroyed,—which God forbid! Whoever comes will, as we are led to believe from the report of our spies, have to engage in battle, or will have a very severe struggle, with the rebels. And, for God's sake, remember that honourable and valiant man the Lord Abergavenny,^a who is on the very point of destruction if he be not rescued. Written in haste at Hereford, June 10th."

^a This was William Beauchamp, to whom the King had given, in the first year of his reign, the castles* of Pembroke, Tenby, Kilgarran, with others, by patent, 29th November, 1 Henry IV; and who was very closely besieged in the spring of 1401, and the summer of 1404, in the castle of Abergavenny.

* MS. Donat. 4596.

The King had in some measure anticipated this strong memorial, by signing, on the very day preceding its date,^{*} a commission of array to the sheriffs of Hereford, Worcester, Gloucester, and Warwick, to raise their counties and proceed forthwith to join Richard of York, and to advance in one body with him for the rescue of William Beauchamp, who was then straitly besieged in his castle of Abergavenny, and entirely destitute. Though no mention is here made of the Prince, nor any allusion to him, we have the best evidence that he was personally engaged during this summer in endeavouring to resist the violence and excesses of the rebels. He was crippled by want of means; he was forced to pawn his few jewels for the present support of himself and his retinue; and, when the money raised on them was exhausted, he was compelled to assure the council in the most direct terms, of his utter inability to remain on his post, if they did not forthwith provide him with adequate supplies. He seems to have acted both with vigour and discretion; and the council placed throughout the fullest confidence in his judgment and integrity.

Three documents at this point of time deserve especial attention. The first is a letter, in French, from the Prince, addressed to his father, and dated Worcester, 25th of June 1404; the second is another

^{*} At Doncaster, June 9th.

letter of the same date, written by the Prince to the council; the third contains the resolutions adopted by them in consequence of this communication.

It is very true that letters afford no infallible proof of the writer's real sentiments and feelings; and it has been said, that expressions of piety or affection in epistles of past ages are not to be interpreted as indices of the mind and state of him who utters them, any more than the ordinary close of a note in the present day proves that it came from a humble-minded and gratefully obliged person. Nevertheless, with these general suggestions before us, and not impugned, there does seem to pervade the following letter from Henry to his father, somewhat more than words of course, or matter-of-form expressions, indicative (unless the writer be a hypocrite, — and hypocrisy has never been laid to Henry of Monmouth's charge^y) of filial dutifulness and affection, as well as of a pious and devout trust in Providence. At all events, it is incumbent on those who forbid our inference in favour of any one from such testimony to show some act, or to quote some words, or direct us to some implied sentiments in the individual, whose

^y The Author leaves this sentence as he wrote it, before he had read the late account of the Field of Agincourt: in that work Henry of Monmouth is in these days, for the first time, accused of hypocrisy; with what justice the reader will decide after reading the charge, and the arguments by which it is now presumed to have been destroyed root and branch. They will be found in the second volume.

letters we are discussing, which would give presumptive evidence against our decision in his favour. But history has assigned no act, no sentiment, no word of an irreligious or immoral tendency, to Henry of Monmouth up to the date of this letter. It is not here implied, or conceded, that history possesses facts of another character subsequently to this date; that point must be the subject of our further inquiry. When this letter was written, as far as we can ascertain, fame had not begun to breathe a whisper against the religious and moral character of the Prince of Wales.

LETTER FROM PRINCE HENRY TO THE KING HIS
FATHER.

“ My very dread and sovereign lord and father. — In the most humble and obedient manner that I know or am able, I commend myself to your high Majesty, desiring every day your gracious blessing, and sincerely thanking your noble Highness for your honourable letters, which you were lately pleased to send to me, written at your Castle of Pontefract, the 21st day of this present month of June [1404]; by which letters I have been made acquainted with the great prosperity of your high and royal estate, which is to me the greatest joy that can fall to my lot in this world. And I have taken the very highest pleasure and entire delight at the news, of which you were pleased to certify me; first, of the speedy arrival of my very dear cousin, the Earl of Westmoreland, and William Clifford, to your Highness; and secondly, the arrival of the despatches from your adversary of Scotland, and other great men of his kingdom, by virtue of your safe conduct, for the good of both the kingdoms, which God of his mercy grant; and that you

may accomplish all your honourable designs, to his pleasure, to your honour, and the welfare of your kingdom, as I have firm reliance in Him who is omnipotent, that you will do. My most dread and sovereign lord and father, at your high command in other your gracious letters, I have removed with my small household to the city of Worcester; and at my request there is come to me, with a truly good heart, my very dear and beloved cousin, the Earl of Warwick, with a fine retinue at his own very heavy expenses; so he well deserves thanks from you for his goodwill at all times.

“ And whether the news from the Welsh be true, and what measures I purpose to adopt on my arrival, as you desire to be informed, may it please your Highness to know that the Welsh have made a descent on Herefordshire, burning and destroying also the county, with very great force, and with a supply of provisions for fifteen days. And true it is that they have burnt and made very great havoc on the borders of the said county. But, since my arrival in these parts, I have heard of no further damage from them, God be thanked! But I am informed for certain that they are assembled with all their power, and keep themselves together for some important object, and, as it is said, to burn the said county. For this reason I have sent for my beloved cousins, my Lord Richard of York and the Earl Marshal, and others the most considerable persons of the counties of that march, to be with me at Worcester on the Tuesday next after the date of this letter, to inform me plainly of the government of their districts; and how many men they will be able to bring, if need be; and to give me their advice as to what may seem to them best to be done for the safeguard of the aforesaid parts. And, agreeably to their advice, I will do all I possibly can to resist the rebels and save the English country, to the utmost of my little power, as God shall give me grace: ever trusting in your high Majesty to remember my poor

estate; and that I have not the means of continuing here without the adoption of some other measures for my maintenance; and that the expenses are insupportable to me. And may you thus make an ordinance for me with speed, that I may do good service, to your honour and the preservation of my humble state. My dread sovereign lord and father, may the allpowerful Lord of heaven and earth grant you a blessed and long life in all good prosperity, to your satisfaction! Written at Worcester the 26th day of June.

“Your humble and obedient Son, HENRY.”

The second letter, written at the same time and place, but addressed to the council, is nearly word for word identical with this till towards its close, when it gives the following strong view of the straits and difficulties to which the Prince and the government were then driven by want of money;² and the personal sacrifice which he was himself compelled to make. “We implore you to make some ordinance for us in time, assured that we have nothing from which we can support ourselves here, except that we have pawned our little plate and jewels, and raised money from them, and with that we shall be able to remain only a short time. And after that, unless you make provision for us, we

² About this time, the King's treasury was in a deplorable state. The minutes of council suggest the payment of 1000 marks in part of the debts of the household, incurred in the time of Atterbury: and the allowance of a sum “for the time past, and to avoid the clamour of the people.”—Minutes of Council, vol. ii. p. 37.

shall be compelled to depart with disgrace and mischief: and the country will be utterly destroyed; which God forbid! And now, since we have shown you the perils and mischiefs [which must ensue], for God's sake make your ordinance in time, for the salvation of the honour of our sovereign lord the King our father, of ourselves, and of the whole realm. And may our Lord protect you, and give you grace to do right!"

The Prince, finding his difficulties increasing, wrote another letter, dated June 30, to the council, urging them to prompt measures; and stating in very positive terms the utter impossibility of his remaining in those parts without supplies. What immediate notice was taken of these pressing communications, does not appear; that the council enabled him to remain on the borders, and to protect the country effectually from the rebels, is proved by their proceedings at Lichfield on the 29th and 30th of the August following. The minutes of those two councils are full of interest. By the first we are informed that the French, under the French Earl of March, had equipped a fleet of sixty vessels in the port of Harfleur, full of soldiers, for the purpose of an immediate invasion of Wales. To meet this rising mischief, the council advise that, since the King could not soon raise an army proportionate to his high estate and dignity, to proceed forthwith into Wales, he should remain at Tutbury until the meeting of parliament at Coventry in the October

following; and in the mean time proclamations should be made, directing all able-bodied men to be ready to attend the King. Orders were also given to the officers of the customs in Bristol to supply wine, corn, and other provisions for the soldiers in the town of Caermarthen, in part payment of their wages. The minutes then record, that, with regard to the county of Hereford, the sheriff and the other gentlemen had requested the lords of the council to pray the King that he would be pleased to thank the Prince for the good protection of the said county since the Nativity of St. John (June 24th), and likewise, that for the well-being of that county, and also of the county of Gloucester, the Prince might be assigned to guard the marches of the said counties, and to make inroads into Overwent and Netherwent, Glamorgan and Morgannoc; and "to carry this into effect, they must provide the wages of five hundred men-at-arms and two thousand archers for three weeks, and through another three weeks three hundred men-at-arms and two thousand archers." In another council, probably at the end of August, the lords recommend that the sum of 3000 marks, due to the King as a fine from the inhabitants of Cheshire, to be paid in three years, should be assigned to the Prince for the safeguard of the castle of Denbigh, and towards the expenses of his other castles in North Wales.^a They recom-

^a August 26, 1404, a thousand marks were assigned to the Prince for the safekeeping of Denbigh and other castles.—MS. Donat. 4597.

mend also that the people of Shropshire be allowed to make a truce with Wales until the last day of November ; and with regard to Herefordshire, that the Prince remain on its borders to the last day of September, and have the same number of men-at-arms and archers (or more) as he had had since the 29th of June ; that he have on his own account 1000 marks, and that on the first day of October he be ready with five hundred men-at-arms and two thousand archers to make an incursion into Wales, and stay there twenty-one days, for the just chastisement of the rebels. And since for these charges the Prince should be paid before his departure, measures had been taken to raise money of several persons by way of loan. Sir John Oldecastle and John ap Herry were to keep the castles of Brecknock and the Haye till Michaelmas. The King also issued his mandate, 13th November 1404, to the sheriffs of Worcester, Gloucester, and other counties, to provide a contingent each of twenty men-at-arms and two hundred archers to join the army of his sons ; premising that he had, by the advice of his parliament, sent his two sons, the Prince and the Lord Thomas, to raise the siege of Coitey,^b in which Alexander Berkroller, lord of that place, was then besieged : we may therefore safely conclude that, through the first part of the winter at least, young

^b The ruins of Coity Castle are still interesting. They are near Bridgend, in Glamorganshire.

Henry was most fully occupied in the Principality.^c

Of the Prince's proceedings in consequence of these instructions we hear nothing before the beginning of the next March : but through the winter ^d (as it should seem) the Welsh chieftain and his French auxiliaries were most busily engaged, especially towards the northern parts. Indeed, it may be surmised, not without probable reason, that the King's troops under the Prince in Monmouthshire, Glamorganshire, and its adjacent districts, and perhaps the forces of Thomas Beaufort, or the Duke of York, in Caermarthen, had driven Owyn and his partisans northward, by the vigorous efforts which they made through the autumn and the early part of the winter. To this season also we are induced to refer those despatches from Conway and Chester,^e which give the most alarming accounts to the King of the insolence and

^c MS. Donat. 4597.

^d A few days before Christmas, some French effected a landing in the Isle of Wight, and boasted that, with the King's leave or without it, they would keep their Christmas there : but they were routed. The French demanded a tribute in the name of Richard and Isabella.

^e These letters are the tenth, eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth, in Sir Henry Ellis' Second Series. He does not assign them to any date positively. "They were probably written," he says, "about 1404." It is here presumed, that they were not written till the opening of the year 1405. They all bear date between the 7th of January and the 20th of February.

activity of his enemies, and the imminent peril of his friends, his castles, and the whole country. One letter speaks of six ships coming out of France "with wyn and spicery full laden." Another reports that the constable of Harlech had been seized by the Welsh and carried to Owyn Glyndowr; and that the castle was in great danger of falling into his hands, being garrisoned only by five Englishmen and about sixteen Welshmen. A third apprises the King that the deputy-constable of Caernarvon had sent a woman to inform the writer, William Venables, the constable of Chester, (by word of mouth, because no man dared to come, and no man or woman could carry letters safely,) of Owyn Glyndowr's purpose, in conjunction with the French, "to assault the town and castle of Caernarvon with engines, sows,^f and ladders of very great length;" whilst in the town and castle there were not more than twenty-eight fighting men, — eleven of the more able of those who were there at the former siege being dead, some of their wounds, others of the plague. In the fourth, the constable of Conway informs the same parties that the people of Caernarvonshire purposed to go into Anglesey to bring out of it all the men and cattle into the mountains, "lest Englishmen should be re-

^f The sow was an engine of the nature of the Roman Vineæ, which, by protecting the assailants from the missiles of the besieged, enabled them to undermine the wall of a town or castle.

freshed therewith." The writer adds, "I durst lay my head that, if there were two hundred men in Caernarvon and two hundred in Conway, from February until May, the commons of Caernarvonshire would come to peace, and pay their dues as well as ever. But should there be a delay till the summer, it will not be so lightly (likely), for then the rebels will be able to lie without (in the open air), as they cannot now do. Also I have myself heard many of the commons and gentlemen of Merionethshire and Caernarvonshire swear that all men of the aforesaid shires, except four or five gentlemen and a few vagabonds (*vacaboundis*), would fain come to peace, provided Englishmen were left in the country to help in protecting them from misdoers; especially must they come into the country whilst the weather is cold." In the fifth letter, we learn that Owyn had agreed with all the men in the castle of Harlech, except seven, to have deliverance of the castle on an early fixed day for a stated sum of gold. A letter, dated Oswestry, February 7th, from the Earl of Arundel and Surrey, conveys the very same sentiments with those of the constable of Conway as to the probability of the immediate termination of the rebellion, either by peace or victory, should any vigorous measures be adopted. He was appointed to take charge of Oswestry, with thirty men-at-arms and one hundred and fifty archers, for eight weeks. He complains that the grand ordinance resolved

upon by the late parliament at Coventry^s had not been put into execution; and states that the rebels were never at any time so high or proud, from an assurance that it, like the others, would become a dead letter.^h

The letter from Henry to his father in the preceding June, and the testimony of the gentlemen of Hereford, who prayed that thanks might be presented to the Prince for his watchful and efficient protection of their county, inform us that the rebels towards the south marches had been kept in check since the Prince's arrival; but they were ready to renew their violence at the very opening of spring. Two letters, one from the King to his council, the other from the Prince to the King, require to be translated literally, and copied into these pages. The former, which is now published for the first time in "The Acts of the Privy Council," proves the hearty good-will entertained by the King towards his son, and the lively paternal interest he took up to that time in his honourable career. It assures us also of the great importance attached by the King to the victory then gained over the rebels. The latter, though published by Rymer and Ellis,

^s The parliament called Indoctum, or Lacklearning. It was in this parliament that the confiscation of the property of the bishops was proposed.

^h At this time Owyn Glyndowr confirms his league with the King of France by deed, dated and signed "in our Castle of Llanpadarn, the 12th of January 1405, and of our principality the sixth."

and others, and though often commented upon before, yet appears to throw so much light upon the character of Prince Henry as a Christian at once and a warrior, especially in that union of valour and mercy in him to which Hotspur first bore testimony four years before, that any treatise on the life and character of Henry of Monmouth would be altogether defective were this letter to be omitted. The King's letter to his council bears date Berkhemstead, March 13, 1405.

“FROM THE KING.

“Very dear and faithful! We greet you well. And since we know that you are much pleased and rejoiced whenever you can hear good news relating to the preservation of our honour and estate, and especially of the common good and honour of the whole realm, we forward to you for your consolation the copy of a letter sent to us by our very dear son, the Prince, touching his government in the marches of Wales; by which you will yourselves become acquainted with the news for which we return thanks to Almighty God. We beg you will convey these tidings to our very dear and faithful friends the Mayor and good people of our city of London, in order that they may derive consolation from them together with us, and praise our Creator for them. May He always have you in his holy keeping.—Given under our signet at our Castle of Berkhemstead, the 13th day of March.”

The following letter, the copy of which the King then forwarded, was written by the Prince at Hereford, on the 11th of March, at night.

LETTER FROM PRINCE HENRY TO THE KING HIS
FATHER.

“ My most redoubted and most sovereign lord and father, in the most humble manner that in my heart I can devise, I commend myself to your royal Majesty, humbly requesting your gracious blessing. My most redoubted and most sovereign lord and father, I sincerely pray that God will graciously show his miraculous aid toward you in all places: praised be He in all his works! For on Wednesday, the eleventh day of this present month of March, your rebels of the parts of Glamorgan, Morgannoc, Usk, Netherwent, and Overwent, were assembled to the number of eight thousand men according to their own account; and they went on the said Wednesday in the morning, and burnt part of your town of Grosmont within your lordship of Monmouth. And I immediatelyⁱ sent off my very dear cousin the Lord Talbot, and the small body of my own household, and with them joined your faithful and gallant knights William Newport and John Greindre; who were but a very small force in all. But very true it is that VICTORY IS NOT IN A MULTITUDE OF PEOPLE, BUT IN THE POWER OF GOD; and this was well proved there. And there, by the aid of the blessed Trinity, your people gained the field, and slew of them by fair account on the field, by the time of their return from the pursuit, some say eight hundred, and some say a thousand, being questioned on pain of death. Nevertheless, whether on such an account it were one or the other I would not contend.

“ And, to inform you fully of all that has been done, I send you a person worthy of credit in this case, my faithful servant

ⁱ All the writers who have copied this letter, from Rymer downwards, have fallen into a ludicrous mistake here. Reading an *n* instead of a *v* in the words *J'envoia* (I sent), they

the bearer of this letter, who was present at the engagement, and did his duty very satisfactorily, as he does on all occasions. And such amends has God ordained you for the burning of four houses of your said town. And prisoners there were none taken excepting one,^k who was a great chieftain among them, whom I would have sent to you, but he *cannot yet ride at his ease*.

“And touching the governance which I purpose to make after this, please your Highness to give sure credence to the bearer of this letter in whatever he shall lay before your Highness on my part. And I pray God that He will preserve you always in joy and honour, and grant me shortly to comfort you with other good news. Written at Hereford, the said Wednesday, at night.

“Your very humble and obedient son,
 “To the King, my most redoubted HENRY.
 and sovereign lord and father.”

The true reading of “I sent,” instead of “Jennoia,” at first might seem to imply that the Prince

have translated the passage, “within your lordship of Monmouth and Jennoia.” Sir Harris Nicolas first supplied the true reading. The mistake led persons well acquainted with Monmouthshire (among others, the Author of these Memoirs,) to make different inquiries as to the lordship of Jennoia: they will now no longer wonder at the unfruitful issue of their search.

^k The author published under the name of Otterbourne says, that Owyn’s son was made prisoner at Usk on the 25th of March, and one thousand five hundred of his men were taken or slain; and that, after the Feast of St. Dunstan, his chancellor was taken. There is reason to doubt whether that chronicler has not mistaken the place and time of the battle to which he refers; though it is not impossible that another battle (of which, however, we have no authentic record,) was fought at Usk a fortnight after the rebels were defeated at Grosmont: Grosmont is about twenty miles distant from Usk.

was not present in person at the battle of Gromont: and there is no positive evidence in the letter to show that he was there. The testimony which he bears to the gallant conduct in that field of his faithful servant, whom he despatched with his letter, has been thought to sanction a belief, that Henry was an eyewitness of the engagement. But from this doubt the mind turns with full satisfaction to the religious sentiments which are interwoven throughout the epistle, and to Henry's considerate and humane treatment of his prisoner. He would, no doubt, have felt a satisfaction and pride in immediately placing a high chieftain of Wales in the hands of the King, on the very day of battle and victory; but he shrunk from gratifying his own wishes, when his pleasure involved the pain of a fellow-creature, though that person was his prisoner. Many an incident throughout his life tends to justify Shakspeare, when he makes Henry IV. speak of his son's philanthropy and tenderness of feeling:

“ He hath a tear for pity, and a hand
Open as day for melting charity.”

2 HENRY IV. act iv. sc. iv.

Those united qualities of valour and mercy, of courage and kindness of heart, which are so beautifully ascribed to a modern English warrior, were never blended in any character of which history speaks in more perfect harmony than in Henry of Monmouth:

“ A furious lion in battle ;
But, duty appeased, in mercy a lamb.”

The lesson thus taught him during his early youth in the field of Grosmont, whether by personal experience of that conflict, or by the representation of his gallant companions in arms, of what may be effected by courage and discipline against an enemy infinitely superior in numbers, was probably not forgotten, ten years afterwards, at Agincourt.

CHAPTER X.

REBELLION OF NORTHUMBERLAND AND BARDOLF. — EXECUTION OF THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK. — WONDERFUL ACTIVITY AND RESOLUTION OF THE KING. — DEPLORABLE STATE OF THE REVENUE. — TESTIMONY BORNE BY PARLIAMENT TO THE PRINCE'S CHARACTER. — THE PRINCE PRESENT AT THE COUNCIL-BOARD. — HE IS ONLY OCCASIONALLY IN WALES, AND REMAINS FOR THE MOST PART IN LONDON.

1405 — 1406.

WHILST the Prince was thus exerting himself to the utmost in keeping the Welsh rebels in check, the King resolved to go once again in person to the Principality with as strong a force as he could muster; and with this intention he set forward, probably about the end of April. On the 8th of May he was at Worcester, when he was suddenly informed of the hostile measures of his enemies in the north. The preface to "The Acts of the Privy Council" gives the following succinct and clear account of the proceedings:—"The most memorable event in the sixth year of Henry IV. was the revolt, in May 1405, of the Earl Marshal, Lord Bardolf, and the Earl of Northumberland, who had been partially restored to the King's confidence after the death of

his son and brother in 1403.^a Henry was at that moment at Worcester; and the earliest notice of the rebellion is contained in a letter from the council to the King, which, after treating of various matters, concluded by stating that they were then just informed by his Majesty's son, John of Lancaster, that Lord Bardolf had privately withdrawn himself to the north; at which they were much astonished, because the King had ordered him to proceed into Wales. To guard against any ill consequences which might arise from this suspicious circumstance, the council instantly despatched in the same direction Lord Roos and Sir William Gascoyne, the Chief Justice, as the individuals in whom the King placed most confidence; and, thinking that Henry might be in want of money, the council borrowed and sent him one thousand marks. With his accustomed promptitude and activity, the King lost not a moment in setting off for the north, to meet the rebellious lords in person; and on the 28th of May he wrote to his council from Derby, acquainting them with

^a A review of this "aged Earl's" behaviour, from the first occasion on which he is introduced to our notice in these Memoirs to the day of his death, supplies only a melancholy succession of acts of broken faith. On the 7th of February 1404, before the assembled estates of the realm, on receiving the King's pardon for the past, he most solemnly swore upon the cross of Canterbury to be true and faithful to his sovereign Henry IV: he "swore also, on the peril of his soul, that he knew of no evil intentions on the part of the Duke of York, or of the Archbishop; and that the King might place full trust and confidence in them as his liege subjects."

the revolt, and desiring them to hasten to him at Pomfret with as many followers as possible."

The Editor of the Proceedings of the Privy Council says nothing of Scrope, Archbishop of York, who had risen in open rebellion against the royal authority; but we cannot pass on without some notice of him. Early in June, King Henry laid hands on that unfortunate prelate, surrounded by followers, and armed in a coat of mail; and he commanded Gascoyne, who was with him, to pass sentence of death upon his prisoner in a summary way. The Chief Justice refused,^b with these words: "Neither you, my lord the King, nor any of your lieges acting in your name, can lawfully, according to the laws of the kingdom, condemn any bishop to death." The King then ordered one Fulthorp to sentence him to decapitation, who forthwith complied; and the Archbishop was carried to execution with every mark of disgrace, on Whitmonday, June 8th. Many legends shortly became current about this warlike prelate, who was one of the most determined enemies of the House of Lancaster. Of the stories propagated soon after his death, one declares that in the field of his last earthly struggle the corn was trodden down, and destroyed irremediably, both by his enemies, who were preparing for

^b Gascoyne does not appear to have been even suspended from his office in consequence of his refusal to sentence the Archbishop; he continued Chief Justice till after the King's death.

his execution, and by his friends and poor neighbours, who came to weep and bewail the fate of their beloved chief pastor. The Archbishop, seeing the destruction which his death was causing, spoke with words of comfort to the multitude, and promised to intercede with heaven that the evil might be averted. The field, continues the story, brought forth at the ensuing harvest six-fold above the average crop. The same page tells that the King was smitten with the leprosy in the face on the very hour of the very day in which the Archbishop was beheaded. The manuscript adds, that many miracles were shown day by day by the Lord at the tomb of this prelate, to which people flocked from every side. The enemies of the King endeavoured to exalt this zealous son of the church into a saint; and to propagate the belief that the King's disease, which never left him, was a signal and miraculous visitation of Heaven, avenging the foul murder of so dauntless a martyr.*

Pope Innocent, in the course of the year, sent a peremptory mandate to the Archbishop of Canterbury to fulminate the curse of excommunication against all those who had participated in the prelate's murder: but the Archbishop did not dare to execute the mandate; for both the King and a large body of the nobility were implicated more or less directly in Scrope's execution, and must have been involved in the same general sentence. The

* Sloane, 1776.

King, on hearing of the decided countenance thus given by the Pope to his rebellious subjects, despatched a messenger to Rome, conveying the military vest of the Archbishop, and charged him to present it to his Holiness; delivering at the same time, as his royal master's message, the words of Jacob's sons, "Lo! this have we found; know now whether it be thy son's coat, or no." A passage in Hardyng seems to imply that, during the life of Henry IV, the devotions of the people to this warrior bishop were forbidden; for he records, apparently with approbation, the permission granted by his son Henry V, to all persons to make their offerings at the shrine of their sainted prelate:

"He gave then, of good devotion,
All men to offer to Bishop Scrope express,
Without letting or any question."

"Before the end of the next month (June),^d Henry was engaged in besieging the Earl of Northumberland's castles; and in a letter to the council, dated Warkworth, on the 2nd of July, he informed them that Prudhoe Castle had immediately surrendered: but that the Castle of Warkworth, being well garrisoned, refused to obey his summons; the captain having declared as his final answer that he would defend it for the Earl. The King had therefore ordered his artillery to be brought against it, which were so ably served, that

^d This is extracted from the Preface of Sir Harris Nicolas, p. 56.

at the seventh discharge the besieged implored his mercy, and the fortress was delivered into his hands on the 1st of July. All the other castles had imitated the example of Prudhoe, excepting Alnwick, which he was then about to attack."

"The exhausted state of the King's pecuniary resources," continues the Preface, "and the distress endured by the soldiers and others engaged in his service, are forcibly shown by the letters of the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, and others. The Duke of York, and his brother Richard, described their retinues in Wales as being in a state of mutiny for want of their wages; and the Duke had evidently made every personal sacrifice within his power to satisfy them. He entreated them to continue there a few weeks longer, authorised them to mortgage his land in Yorkshire, pledged himself "on his truth, and as he is a true gentleman," not to receive any part of his revenues until his soldiers were paid, and promised that he would not ask them to continue longer than the time specified. Every source of income seems to have been anticipated; and it is scarcely possible to conceive a government in greater distress for money than was Henry IV's at this point of time. Nothing but the wisdom and indomitable energy for which that monarch was distinguished could have enabled him to surmount the difficulties of his position; and the facts detailed in this volume* entitle Henry to a high

* The Acts of the Privy Council.

rank among the most distinguished of European sovereigns both as a soldier and as a statesman. No sooner had he suppressed rebellion in one place than it showed itself in another; and, for many years, the Welsh could barely be kept in check by the presence of the Prince of Wales and a large army. By France he was constantly annoyed; and, if he was not actually at war with the Scotch, it was necessary to watch their conduct with great anxiety and suspicion. To add to his embarrassment, the great mass of his own subjects were tempted to revolt by the distracted condition of the country, by the existence of the true heir to the throne, and by reports that their former sovereign was yet alive. Henry's treatment of them was necessarily firm, but conciliatory. He dared not recruit his exhausted finances by heavy impositions on the people; and the generous sacrifices made by the peers to avoid so dangerous an expedient had reduced them to poverty."

Such is the clear and able representation given to us of the state of the kingdom at large, and of the difficulties with which Henry IV. and his supporters had to struggle, whilst Henry of Monmouth was exerting himself to the very utmost in repressing the rebels in Wales.^f His means were, indeed,

^f The extraordinary distress of the King from the want of pecuniary means cannot be questioned: though (independently of taxes and subsidies) large sums must have been flowing into the royal treasury, as well from the immense possessions belonging to the Duchy of Lancaster, as from the forfeited estates of the rebels. Still the King's coffers were drained.

very limited ; he seldom had a “ large army ” at his command ; and his measures were lamentably embarrassed by the exhausted state of the treasury. The King endeavoured from time to time, in some cases successfully, at others with a total failure, to remedy these evils, and to supply his son with the power of acting in a manner worthy of himself, and the importance of the enterprise in which he was engaged. On the 31st of May he despatched a letter to his council from Nottingham, which contains many interesting particulars ; whilst the total inability of his ministers to comply with his directions speaks very strongly of the trying circumstances in which the Prince was trained. The King begins by reminding the council that it was by the advice of them and other nobles, and the commons of the realm, that the defence of Wales was committed to his very dear and beloved son the Prince, as his lieutenant there ; at the time of whose appointment it was agreed, that since he had in his retinue a certain number of men-at-arms and archers, though for the protection of the realm, yet living at his expense, he should receive a certain proportion of the subsidy voted at the last parliament. The King then representing to them the vast mischiefs which would befall the marches, and by consequence the whole realm, if the rebels were not effectually resisted, strictly charges and commands his council, with all possible speed to make payment in part of whatever the Prince was to

receive from the King on that account. And though the Prince had under him the Duke of York living there for the safeguard of the country, nevertheless the King desired that the money paid for the whole country of Wales should be put wholly and exclusively into the hands of the Prince himself, to be employed and disbursed at his discretion, with the advice of his council. The reason for this last order he alleges to be the assurance given to him that the sums on former occasions paid to others under the Prince for his use had not been expended properly to the profit of the marches, nor agreeably to the intention of the King and council. He ends his letter by enjoining them, for the love they bore to him, and the confidence he placed in them, to pay hearty attention to this subject. Notwithstanding this urgent appeal, the council reply that the assignments already made, and the payments absolutely indispensable, together with the failure of the supplies, would not suffer them to meet his wishes. This answer was written on a Monday, probably the 8th of June. On the 12th we find the King' (it may be, to make some little compensation for this disappointment,) assigning to the Prince, in aid of his sustentation, the castle and estates of Framlyngham, which had fallen to the crown by forfeiture from Thomas Mowbray.

The rapid movements of the King in those days of incessant alarm are quite astonishing. Just as in the battle of Shrewsbury he impressed the enemy

with an idea of his ubiquity throughout the whole field, so at this time, from day to day, he appears in whatever part of the kingdom his presence seemed to be most needed. On the 7th of August he was at Pontefract, whither tidings were brought to him that the French admiral, Hügevyn, had arrived at Milford to aid the Welsh rebels; and he sent a commission of array to the sheriff of Herefordshire to meet him. On the 4th of September^s we find him at Hereford, attended by many nobles and others, where he issued a warrant to raise money by way of loan, to enable him to resist the Welsh.

In less than three weeks from this time the King was resident near York, and promulgated an ordinance on the 22nd of September to the sheriffs of Devon and other counties to meet him on the 10th of October at Evesham; the body of this ordinance contained a very interesting report which the King had received from "his most dear first-born son," Henry Prince of Wales, whom he had left in that country for the chastisement of the rebels. "Those," he says, "in the castle of Llanpadarn have submitted to the Prince, and have sworn on the body of the Lord, administered to them by the hands of our cousin Richard Courtney, chancellor of Oxford, in the presence of the Duke of York, that if we, or our son, or our lieutenant, shall not be removed from the siege by Owyn Glyndowr between the 24th October next coming at sun-

^s Rymer's Fœd.

rising, and the Feast of All Saints the next to come (1st November), in that case the said rebels will restore the castle in the same condition; and for greater security they have given hostages. Wishing to preserve the state and honour of ourself, our son, and the common good of England, which may be secured by the conquest of that castle, (since probably by the conquest of that castle the whole rebellion of the Welsh will be terminated, the contrary to which is to be lamented by us and all our faithful subjects,) we intend shortly to be present at that siege, on the 24th of October, together with our son, or to send a sufficient deputy to aid our son. We therefore command you to cause all who owe us suit and service to meet us at Evesham on the 10th of October."

Towards the close of this year we are reminded again of the deplorable state of the King's revenue, by the urgent remonstrance of Lord Grey of Codnor, and the recommendation of the council in consequence. Lord Grey complained that he could obtain no money from the King's receivers, though they had warrants and commands to pay him: that he had pawned his plate and other goods; and that, without redeeming them, he could not remove from Caermarthen to Brecon.^b He then

^b In the Minutes of a previous Council, probably in the spring of 1405, Lord Grey is directed to take charge of Brecon with forty lances and two hundred archers, and of Radnor with thirty lances and one hundred and fifty archers.

prays that means may be adopted for payment of his debts and the wages of his men, if the royal pleasure was for him to remain in those parts, or else to allow him to be excused. The council advise the King to make him Lieutenant of South Wales and West Wales, considering his vast trouble in bringing his people from England; to direct payment to be made to him from the revenues of Brecknock, Kidwelly, Monmouth,ⁱ and Ogmore, belonging to the Duchy of Lancaster; and to grant him the commission to be Justice of those parts during the time of his lieutenancy. He was appointed lieutenant on the 2nd of December 1405, and continued so till the 1st of February 1406. The council also complained that the people of Pembrokeshire had not done their duty in resisting the rebels, and recommended the King to charge Lord Grey to make inquisition of the defaulters.^k

In the following year, on the 22nd of March 1406, Henry Beaufort Bishop of Winchester, was commissioned to treat anew for a marriage between Prince Henry and some "one of the daughters of our adversary of France." But the negotiation seems to have failed. On the 18th of this month

ⁱ The council inform the King that the council of his Duchy had made an exception of the lordship of Monmouth, which should bear the most substantial of all the assignments.

^k On the 3rd of March 1406, the Commons speak of those castles in Wales "which, with God's blessing, might be hereafter reduced."

permission was given by the King to Edmund Walsingham to ransom his brother Nicholas. The document gives a brief but most significant account of the treatment which awaited Owyn's captives. Walsingham, who was taken prisoner near Brecknock, was plundered and kept in ward in so wretched and miserable a state that he could scarcely survive. His ransom was to be 50*l*.¹

On the 3rd of April the Commons prayed the King to send his honourable letters under his privy seal, thanking the Prince for the good and constant labour and diligence which he had, and continued to have, in resisting and chastening the rebels.

On the 5th of April a commission was given by the King to Lord Grey and the Prior of Ewenny to execute "all contracts and agreements"^m made by the Prince our dear son, whom we have appointed our Lieutenant of North and South Wales, and have authorized to receive into allegiance at his discretion our rebels up to the Feast of St. Martin in Yeme."ⁿ

Very few events are recorded as having taken place through this spring and summer which tend to throw light on the character or proceedings of

¹ MS. Donat. 4596.

^m The Minutes of Council, at the end of March or the beginning of April, record a recommendation that the fines of the rebels as well as the rents and issues from their land, be expended on the wars in Wales: and John Bodenham was appointed comptroller of these fines.

ⁿ St. Martin in the winter.

Henry of Monmouth. He remained in Wales, probably without leaving it for any length of time. The crown had been already settled upon him and his three brothers in succession; but on the 22nd of December this year, in full parliament, at the urgent instance of the great people of the realm, the succession was again limited to Henry the Prince and his three brothers, and their heirs, but not to the exclusion of females.

The French made a more feeble attempt to assist Glyndowr, in 1406, with a fleet of thirty-six vessels, the greater part of which was shipwrecked in a storm.^o They had been more successful on their former invasions of Wales: but they found in that wild and impoverished country little to induce them to persevere in a struggle which promised neither national glory nor individual profit; and they left Owyn to drag out his war as he best could, depending on his own resources.

It is with unalloyed satisfaction that we are able to record the testimony which the Commons of England at this time, by the mouth of their Speaker, bore to the character of Henry of Monmouth. It may seem strange that no use has been made of this evidence by any historian, not even by those who have undertaken to rescue his name from the aspersions with which it has been assailed. The tribute of praise and admiration for his son, then

^o The French about this time made a sort of piratical attack on the Isle of Wight.

addressed to the King on his throne, in the midst of the assembled prelates, and peers, and commons of the whole realm, is the more valuable because it bears on some of those very points in which his reputation has been most attacked. The vague tradition of subsequent chroniclers, the unbridled fancy of the poet, the bitterness of polemical controversy, unite in representing Henry as a self-willed, obstinate young man, regardless of every object but his own gratification, "as dissolute as desperate," under no control of feelings of modesty, with no reverence for his elders, discarding all parental authority, reckless of consequences; his own will being his only rule of conduct, his own pleasures the chief end for which he seemed to live. These charges have been adopted, and re-echoed, and sent down to posterity with gathered strength and confirmation, by our poets, by our historians, civil and ecclesiastical, by the ornaments of the legal profession,—even one of our most celebrated Judges adding the weight of his name to the general accusation. It is not the province of this work to vindicate the character of Henry from charges brought against him: truth, not eulogy, is its professed object, and will (the Author trusts) be found to have been its object not in profession only. But, before the verdict of guilty be returned against Henry, justice requires that the evidence which his accusers offer be thoroughly sifted, and the testimony of his contemporaries, solemnly given before

the assembled estates of the realm, must in common fairness be weighed against the assertions of those who could have had no personal knowledge of him, and who derived their views through channels of the character and purity of which we are not assured. The evidence here offered was given when Henry was towards the close of his nineteenth year.

The Rolls of Parliament record the following as the substance of the opening address made by the Speaker, on Monday, June 7, 1406, "to the King seated on his royal throne." "He made a commendation of the many excellencies and virtues which habitually dwelt [reposerent] in the honourable person of the Prince; and especially, first, of the humility and obedience which he bears towards our sovereign lord the King, his father; so that there can be no person, of any degree whatever, who entertains or shows more honour and reverence of humbleness and obedience to his father than he shows in his honourable person. Secondly, how God hath granted to him, and endowed him with good heart and courage, as much as ever was needed in any such prince in the world. And, thirdly, [he spoke] of the great virtue which God hath granted him in an especial manner, that howsoever much he had set his mind upon any important undertaking to the best of his own judgment, yet for the great confidence which he placed in his council, and in their loyalty, judgment, and discretion, he would kindly and graciously be influenced, and con-

form himself to his council and their ordinance, according to what seemed best to them, setting aside entirely his own will and pleasure; from which it is probable that, by the grace of God, very great comfort and honour and advantage will flow hereafter. For this, the said Commons humbly thank our Lord Jesus Christ, and they pray for its good continuance." Such is the preface to the prayer of their petition that he might be acknowledged by law as heir apparent.

It may be questioned, after every fair deduction has been made from the intrinsic value of this testimony, on the ground of the complimentary nature of such state-addresses in general, whether history contains any document of undisputed genuineness which bears fuller or more direct testimony to the union in the same prince of undaunted valour, filial reverence and submission, respect for the opinion of others, readiness to sacrifice his own will, and to follow the advice of the wise and good, than this Roll of Parliament bears to the character of Henry of Monmouth. And when we reflect to what a high station he had been called whilst yet a boy; with what important commissions he had been intrusted; how much fortune seems to have done to spoil him by pride and vain-glory from his earliest youth, this page of our national records seems to set him high among the princes of the world; not so much as an undaunted warrior and triumphant hero, as the conqueror of himself, the example of a chas-

tened modest spirit, of filial reverence, and a single mind bent on his duty. To all this Henry added that quality without which such a combination of moral excellencies would not have existed, the believing obedient heart of a true Christian. This last quality is not named in words by the Speaker ; but his immediate reference to the grace of God, and his thanks in the name of the people of England to the Almighty Saviour for having imparted these graces to their Prince, appear to bring the question of his religious principles before our minds. Whilst in seeking for the solution of that question we find other pages of his history, equally genuine and authentic, which assure us that he was a sincere and pious Christian, or else a consummate hypocrite,—a character which his bitterest accusers have never ventured to fasten upon him.^p

On the same day, June 7, 1406,^q the Commons pray that Henry the Prince may be commissioned to go into Wales with all possible haste, considering the news that is coming from day to day of the rebellion of the Earl of Northumberland, and

^p The Author must now add with regret, that even hypocrisy has been within these few last years laid to Henry's charge most unsparingly ; with what degree of justice will be shewn in a subsequent chapter.

^q Stowe relates, that the King about this time, in crossing from Queenborough to Essex, was very nearly taken prisoner by some French vessels. He avoided London because the plague was raging there, in which thirty thousand persons died.

others. They also, June 19, declare the thanks of the nation to be due to Lord Grey, John Greindore, Lord Powis, and the Earls of Chester and Salop. Henry probably returned to the Principality without delay; but there is reason to infer that, towards the autumn of this year, Owyn Glyn-dowr felt himself too much impoverished and weakened to attempt any important exploit; resolved not to yield, and yet unable to strike any efficient blow. The Prince was thus left at liberty to visit London for a while; and, on the 8th of December 1406, we find him present at a council at Westminster. This council met to deliberate upon the governance of the King's household; which seems to have drawn to itself their serious attention by its extravagance and mismanagement.^r They requested that good and honest officers might be appointed, especially a good controller. They even recommended two by name, Thomas Bromflet and Arnaut Savari; and desired that the steward and

^r This dissatisfaction had been expressed in no very gentle language by the Commons in Parliament on the 7th of the preceding June, the very day on which they speak in such strong terms of the good and amiable qualities of the Prince. Indeed, we can scarcely avoid suspecting that the Commons intended to reflect, by a sort of side-wind, on the want in the King of an adequate estimate of his son's worth; with somewhat perhaps of an implied contrast between his excellences and the defects of his father, whose unsatisfactory proceedings seem at this time to have been gradually alienating the public respect, and transferring his popularity to his son.

treasurer might seek for others. They proposed also that a proper sum should be provided for the household before Christmas. The council then proceeded to make the following suggestion, which probably could have been regarded by the King only as an encroachment on his personal liberty and prerogative, a severe reflection upon himself, and an indication of the unkind feelings of those with whom it originated. "Also, it seems desirable that, the said feast ended, our said sovereign the King should withdraw himself to some convenient place, where, by the deliberation and advice of himself and his council and officers, such moderate regulations might be established in the said household as would thenceforth tend to the pleasure of God and the people."

Whether the Prince took any part in these proceedings, or not, we are left in ignorance. Equally in the dark are we as to his line of conduct with regard to those thirty-one articles proposed by the Commons, just a fortnight afterwards; articles evidently tending to interfere with the royal prerogative, and to limit the powers and increase the responsibility of the King's council. "The Speaker requested that all the lords of the council should be sworn to observe these articles;" but they refused to comply, unless the King, "of his own motion," should specially command them to take the oath. This proceeding respecting the council forms an important feature in its history, as it proves the

very extensive manner in which the Commons interested themselves in its measures and constitution. Whether we may trace to these transactions, as their origin, the differences which in after years show themselves plainly between the King and his son, or whether other causes were then in operation, which time has veiled from our sight, or which documents still in existence, but hitherto unexamined, may bring again to light, we cannot undertake to determine.* Be that as it may, though from this time we find Henry of Monmouth on some occasions in Wales, yet he seems to have taken more and more a part in the management of the nation at large; and, as he grew in the estimation of the great people of the land, his royal father appears to have more and more retired from public business, and to have sunk in importance. Few documents† are preserved among the records now accessible which give any information as to the

* In 8 Henry IV, (that is, between September 30, 1406, and September 29, 1407,) a licence is recorded (Pat. 8 Hen. IV. p. i. m. 17.), by which the King permits "his dearest son Henry, Prince of Wales, to grant the advowson of the church of Frodyngham, Lincolnshire, — which was his own possession—to the abbot and convent of Renesly for ever." Long subsequently to this, we find no immediate traces of any coolness between Henry and his father.

† The Prince was present, 23rd January 1407, when his father received from the Bishop of Durham the great seal of England, and delivered it to Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, then made Chancellor. (Claus 8 Hen. IV. m. 23, d.)

Prince's proceedings through the year 1407 ; but those few are by no means devoid of interest, as throwing some light upon the progress of the Welsh rebellion, and, in a degree, on Henry's character, being at the same time confirmatory of the view above taken of his occupations.

The Prince had laid siege to the castle of Aberystwith, situate near the town of Llanpadern ; but how long he had been before that fortress, or, indeed, at what time he had returned to the Principality, history does not record. If, as we may infer, the King did retire, according to the suggestion of the council, "to some convenient place," the Prince's presence was more required in London ; whilst, Owyn's power being evidently at that time on the decline, the necessity of his personal exertions in Wales became less urgent. No accounts of the proceedings either of Owyn, of the King, or of the Prince, at this precise period seem to have reached our time. Probably nothing beyond the siege of a castle, or an indecisive skirmish, took place during the spring and summer. Among the documents, to which allusion has just been made, one bears date September 12, 1407, containing an agreement between Henry Prince of Wales on the one part, and, on the other, Rees ap Gryffith and his associates. The Welshmen stipulate not to destroy the houses, nor molest the shipping, should any arrive ; and the Prince covenants to give them free egress for their persons and goods. The motives by which he

professes to be influenced are very curious : “ For the reverence of God and All Saints, and especially also of his own patron, John of Bridlington ;”^a for the saving of human blood ; and at the petition of Richard ap Gryffyth, Abbot of Stratflorida.”

Eight years after this, 23rd January 1415, a petition, which presents more than one point of curiosity, was preferred to Henry of Monmouth, then King, with reference to this siege of Aberystwith. Gerard Strong prays that the King would issue a warrant commanding the treasurer and barons of the exchequer to grant him a discharge for the metal of a brass cannon burst at the siege of Aberystwith ; of a cannon called *The King's Daughter*, burst at the siege of Harlech ; of a cannon burst in proving it by Anthony Gunner, at Worcester ; of a cannon with two chambers ; two iron guns, with gunpowder ; and cross-bows and arrows, delivered to various castles.” The King granted the petition in all its prayer. This petitioner was perhaps

^a John of Bridlington.—John of Bridlington had been very recently admitted among the saints of the Roman calendar : probably he was the very last then canonized. Letters addressed to all nations of safe conduct to John Gisbourne, Canon of the Priory of Bridlington, who was then going to Rome to negotiate in the matter of the canonization of John, the late Prior, were given by Henry IV. as recently as October 4, 1400. And Walsingham records that in 1404, by command of the Pope, the body of St. John, formerly Prior of the Canons of Bridlington, since miracles evidently attended it, was translated by the hands of the Archbishop of York and the Bishops of Durham and Carlisle.

encouraged to prefer his memorial by the success with which another suit had been urged, only in the preceding month (13th December 1414), with reference to the same period. John Horne, citizen and fishmonger of London, presented to Henry V. and his council a petition in these words: "When you were Prince, his vessel laden with provisions was arrested (pressed) for the service of Lords Talbot and Furnivale, and their soldiers, at the siege of Harlech; * which siege would have failed had those supplies not been furnished by him, as Lord Talbot certifies. On unlading and receiving payment, the rebels came upon him, burnt his ship, took himself prisoner, and fixed his ransom at twenty marks. He was liable to be imprisoned for the debt which he owed for the cargo." The King granted his petition, and ordered him to be paid. Henry was then on the point of leaving England for Normandy; and these reminiscences of his early campaigns might have presented themselves to his thoughts with agreeable associations, and rendered his ear more ready to listen to petitions, which seem at all events to have been presented somewhat tardily.

An important circumstance, hitherto unobserved by writers on these times, is incidentally recorded in the Pell Rolls. Prince Henry is there reimbursed, on June 1, 1409, a much larger sum than

* This, we infer, must have been in the summer of 1409. Vide infra.

usual for the pay of his men-at-arms and archers in Wales; and is in the same entry stated to have been retained by the consent of the council, on the 12th of the preceding May, to remain in attendance on the person of the King, and at his bidding. The Latin^w might be thought to leave it in doubt whether this absence from his Principality, and constant attendance on the King, was originally the result of his own wishes, or his father's, or at the suggestion of the council. But the circumstance of the consent of the council being recorded proves that Henry's absence from Wales and residence in London were not the mere result of his own will and pleasure, independently of the wishes of those whom he ought to respect; but were at all events in accordance with the expressed approbation of his father and the council. Probably the plan originated with the council, the Prince willingly accepting the office, the King intimating his consent.

^w "Hen. Principi Walliæ retento 12^o die Maii anno 8vo de assensu consilii Regis moraturo penes ipsum Dominum Regem."

CHAPTER XI.

PRINCE HENRY'S EXPEDITION TO SCOTLAND, AND SUCCESS. — THANKS PRESENTED TO HIM BY PARLIAMENT. — HIS GENEROUS TESTIMONY TO THE DUKE OF YORK. — IS FIRST NAMED AS PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL. — RETURNS TO WALES. — IS APPOINTED WARDEN OF THE CINQUE PORTS AND CONSTABLE OF DOVER. — WELSH REBELLION DWINDLES AND DIES. — OWYN GLYNDOWR'S CHARACTER AND CIRCUMSTANCES; HIS REVERSES AND TRIALS. — HIS BRIGHT POINTS UNDERVALUED. — THE UNFAVOURABLE SIDE OF HIS CONDUCT UNJUSTLY DARKENED BY HISTORIANS. — REFLECTIONS ON HIS LAST DAYS. — FACSIMILE OF HIS SEALS AS PRINCE OF WALES.

1407 — 1409.

THOUGH our own documents fail to supply us with any further information as to the proceedings of Henry of Monmouth through the year 1407, and though he might have been allowed some breathing time by the decreased energy of the Welsh rebels, yet Monstrelet informs us that he was actively engaged in a campaign at the other extremity of the kingdom. The historian thus introduces his readers to this affair: "How the Prince of Wales, eldest

son of the King of England, accompanied by his two uncles and a very great body of chivalry, went into Scotland to make war." He then commences his chapter by the not very usual assurance that he is about to relate a matter of fact. "Then it is the truth that at this time, 1407, about the Feast of All Saints (1st November), Henry Prince of Wales^a mustered an army of one thousand men-at-arms and six thousand archers; among whom were his two uncles, the Duke of York, the Earl of Dorset, the Lords Morteines, de Beaumont, de Rol, and Cornwall, together with many other noblemen; who all marched towards Scotland, chiefly because the Scots had lately broken the truce between the two kingdoms, and done great damage by fire and sword in the duchy of Lancaster, and the district around Roxburgh. The Scots were not aware of their approach till they were near at hand, and had committed great devastation. As soon as the King of Scotland, who was at the town of Saint "Iango" (Andrew's) in the middle of his kingdom, heard of it, he issued orders immediately to his chiefs; and in a few days a powerful army was assembled, which he sent under the command of the Earl of Douglas and Buchan towards the Marches. But, when they were

^a The Pell Rolls record payment (16th November 1407) to the Prince, by the hand of John Strange, his treasurer of war, for one hundred and twenty men-at-arms and three hundred and sixty archers, then remaining at the abbey of Stratfleure, to reduce the rebels, and give battle in North and South Wales.

within six leagues, they learnt that the English were too strong for them. They consequently sent ambassadors to the Prince of Wales and his council, who brought about a renewal of the truce for a year; and thus the aforesaid Prince of Wales, having done much damage in Scotland, returned into England, and the Scots dismissed their army."

Soon after his return from Scotland we find Henry with his father at Gloucester,^b where a Parliament was held in the beginning of December; the records of which enable us to carry on still further the testimony borne to the Prince's character by his contemporaries, and to speak of an act of generosity and noble-mindedness placed beyond the reach of calumny to disparage. The King, on the 1st of December issued a commission for negotiating a peace with France; alleging, as the chief reason for hastening it, his desire to have more time and leisure to appease the schism in the church. On the last day of their sitting, the Parliament prayed the King to present the thanks of the nation to the Prince of Wales for his great services; in answer to which the King returned many thanks to the Commons. Immediately on receiving this testimony of public gratitude, "the Prince fell down upon his

^b The reason assigned by Henry IV. for convening this Parliament at Gloucester, must not be overlooked.—He believed that the nearer he himself, and his nobles, and his court, were to "his dear son, then commissioned to reduce the rebels in Wales," the greater probability there was of a successful issue of the Prince's campaign.

knees before the King, and very humbly mentioning that he had heard of certain evil-intentioned obloquies and detractions made to the slander of the Duke of York,^c declared that, if it were not for the Duke's good advice and counsel, he, my lord the Prince himself, and others in his company, would have been in great peril and desolation." "Moreover," (continued the Prince,) "the Duke, as though he had been one of the poorest gentlemen of the realm who would have to toil and struggle for the acquirement of his own honour and name, laboured, and did his very best to give courage and comfort to all others around him. He affirmed also, that the Duke was in everything a loyal and valiant knight."^d This generous conduct towards one on whom the royal displeasure had fallen, but who seems to have always conducted himself as a brave and faithful and honourable subject, naturally raised in all who witnessed it a still higher admiration of the character of the Prince, whose conduct had repeatedly called for their grate-

^c By the Author published as Otterbourne, we are told, that the Lady Le Despenser charged the Duke of York with having been the author of the plot for stealing away the sons of the Earl of March, and also for attempting the King's life. On the Pell Roll, beginning Friday, October 3rd, 1407, payment is recorded to divers messengers sent to seize for the King's use all the goods and chattels of Edward, Duke of York, and Lord Le Despenser: and, subsequently, payment to one Leget, for the safe conveyance of Lord Le Despenser from London to the castle of "Killynworth." The year before this, Edward, Duke of York, was the King's Lieutenant of South Wales.

^d Rolls of Parliament, 8 Hen. IV.

ful thanks and warmest eulogies. The Parliament would not separate without first praying the King, that all who adhered steadily and faithfully to the Prince of Wales might be encouraged and rewarded, and all who deserted him, and left his company without his permission, might be punished.

The records of the year 1408 are particularly barren of facts with regard either to the affairs of the kingdom at large, to the state^e of the Principality, or to the occupations and proceedings of Henry of Monmouth. Shortly after Midsummer he was present as a member of a council held in the church of St. Paul, when an indenture of agreement between the King and his son, Thomas of Lancaster, afterwards Duke of Clarence, was submitted to them for confirmation. Besides the stipulated conditions on which the Lord Thomas should engage to execute the office of Viceroy in Ireland, together with the sources of his allowance and the mode of payment, this agreement contains also a provision that the Prince^f

^e A minute of council (20th of February) states the bare fact that Owyn, late secretary to Glyndowr, had been committed to the custody of Lord Grey, from November 4, 1406, and had remained in ward four hundred and seventy-three days; and that Gryffyth of Glyndowr, (Owyn Glyndowr's son,) whom the Constable of the Tower had delivered to the same lord on the 8th of June, had been in custody two hundred and fifty days.

^f The custody of the Earl of March and his brother was given to the Prince of Wales on February 1st, 1409; and, since he had received nothing for their sustentation, an assignment of five hundred marks a year was made to him from the duties of skins and wool. On the 3rd of July, the King granted to

should first be paid what was assigned to him for the safeguard of Wales. The record of this council concludes by adding, "And it was agreed by my lord the Prince, and the other lords of the council, and by them promised to the said Lord Thomas, that, as much as in them lay, the assignments made to him, and specified in that indenture, should not be revoked or stopped in any way." The closing paragraph of this minute of the council is very important and interesting, especially in one particular, presenting Henry of Monmouth to us under a new aspect: it is the first instance in which we find the name of the Prince mentioned by itself individually, in contradistinction to the other members of the council; a practice for some time afterwards generally observed.

Henry began at this time, in consequence, no doubt, of the requisition of the council, to take a prominent part in the government of the kingdom at large, and to enter upon that life of political activity which gained for him the confidence and admiration of the great majority of the people, whilst it exposed him to the envy and jealousy of some individuals; yet he was not immediately released from the cares and anxieties and expenses which the

him "the manors belonging to Edmund, son and heir of Roger Mortimer, Earl of March," during the young man's minority. The Prince's revenues seem to have been scanty in the extreme, and his father had recourse to many of the various modes of raising money usually adopted in those days.

disturbed state of his Principality involved. For in the early part of the autumn of this year we find him again present at Caermarthen :^g we have reason, nevertheless, to believe that, when the winter closed in, he quitted Wales, never to return to it again either as Prince or King.

After the Prince, however, had withdrawn from personally exerting himself in the suppression of the insurgents, Owyn Glyndowr still carried on a kind of desultory warfare, rallying from time to time his scattered and dispirited adherents, heading them in predatory incursions upon the property of his enemies, laying violent hands on the persons of those who resisted his authority, and depriving them of their liberty or their lives, as best suited his own views of policy. On the 16th of May 1409, a mandate issued by the King at Westminster, to Edward Charleton, Lord Powis, with others,^h is couched in language which draws a frightful picture of the terror and confusion and misery caused by these reckless rebels; conveying, nevertheless, at the same time the idea of a

^g On the 23rd of September, Henry executed a deed by which of especial grace he gave "for the term of life to William Malbon, our valet de chambre, the office of Raglore [Qu: Regulator?] of the commotes of Glenerglyn and Hannynyok in our county of Cardigan. Given under our seal in our castle of Caermarthen, in the ninth year of the reign of our lord and father."

^h The same commission is sent to the Duke of York, Lords Arundel, Warwick, Reginald Grey of Ruthyn, Richard Grey of Codnor, Constance, wife of the late Thomas Le Despenser, William Beauchamp, and others.

lawless band of insurgents resisting the authority of the government to the utmost of their power, but no longer of an army headed by a sovereign and struggling for independence. The preamble of the commission runs thus: "Whereas, from the report of many, we understand that Owyn de Glyndowrdy, and John,ⁱ who pretends that he is Bishop of St. Asaph, and other our rebels and traitors in Wales, together with certain of our enemies of France, Scotland, and other places, have now recently congregated afresh, and gone about the lands of us, and of others our lieges, in the same parts of Wales, day and night wickedly seizing upon some of the said lands; and capturing, scourging, and imprisoning our faithful lieges; consuming,^j carrying away, and de-

ⁱ This prelate was John Trevaux, who was consecrated in 1395, and deposed in 1402. Much doubt hangs over the appointment of his immediate successor. Some say David, the second of that name, was appointed to the see in 1402. Robert de Lancaster was consecrated in 1411. A similar doubt exists as to the successor of Richard Young, Bishop of Bangor. Whether a prelate named Lewis immediately followed him on his translation to Rochester in 1404, or not, is very uncertain.

^j Sir Henry Ellis, having represented the mischief done to Wales by Owyn to have been incalculable, enumerates a few instances of the misery he caused: Montgomery deflourished, (as Leland expresses himself,) Radnor partly destroyed,—"and the voice is there, that when he won the castle he took threescore men that had the guard, and beheaded them on the brink of the castle yard." "The people about Dinas did burn the castle there, that Owyn should not keep it for his fortress." The Haye, Abergavenny, Grosmont, Usk, Pool, the Bishop's castle

vastating their property, and committing many other enormities against our peace: We, willing to resist the malice of the aforesaid Owyn, and the aforesaid pretended Bishop, and to provide for the peace and repose of Wales, give you this command.”

Ten Welsh prisoners, under a warrant dated October 18th, were delivered, as it is supposed for execution, by the Constable of Windsor to William Lisle, Marshal of England. From this circumstance some writers have inferred that a considerable engagement took place this summer; but it may be doubted whether the measures adopted in accordance with the above commission would not sufficiently account for even a far greater number of prisoners being at the disposal of the King: for he strictly charged all those lords and sheriffs to whom his commission was directed “not to quit Wales till Owyn and the pretended Bishop should be utterly routed, but to attack them with the whole posse of the realm night and day.” No doubt can be entertained that both their duty and their interest would induce these persons to put the King’s mandate into execution promptly and vigorously; and probably many of Owyn’s partisans fell

and the Archdeacon’s house at Llandaff, with the cathedrals of Bangor and St. Asaph, were all either in part or wholly victims of his rage. The list might be much augmented. At Cardiff, he burnt the whole town, except the street in which the Franciscan monks dwelt. These brethren were reported to have contributed large sums to support Glyndowr’s cause, and to enable him to invade England.

into the hands of the government in the course of the present summer and autumn: Owyn himself, also, either sued for a truce, or acceded to the proposals made to him. The persons to whom the King delegated the duty of crushing him, either influenced by a sense of the misery caused far and wide by the depredations and havoc carried on by the Welsh rebels on every side, or growing tired of a protracted struggle which brought to them neither glory nor profit, made a truce with Owyn without any warrant from the King. So far, however, was he from sanctioning their proceeding that he annulled the truce altogether, and (November 23rd, 1409,) issued a new mandate to divers other persons to hasten with all their powers against the rebels.

A curious legal document, of a date later by five years than the circumstance to which it refers, informs us that the King, when enumerating in his commission to Lord Powis the partisans of Owyn, in addition to the auxiliaries of Scotland and France, might have mentioned the malcontents also of England. Owyn's British supporters, even at so late a period of his rebellion, were not confined to the Principality, but were found in other parts of the kingdom. In Trinity Term, 2 Henry V. (1414,) a presentation is found, recording this curious fact: "John, Lord Talbot,^k (the Lord Furnivale,) was on his road towards Caernarvon, there

^k Some documents by mistake represent Lord Talbot and the Lord Furnivale as two distinct individuals.

to abide, and resist the malice of Owyn Glyndowr and other rebels in the parts of Wales. Accompanied by sixty men-at-arms and seven score archers, he was hastening onward with all possible speed, in need of victuals, arms, and other necessities, intending to pass through Shrewsbury, and there to buy them. On the Monday before the Nativity of John the Baptist, (17th June,) in the tenth year of the late King, (1409,) one John Weole, constable of the town and castle, and Richard Laken of Laken, in the same county, Esquire, and others, with very many malefactors, of premeditated malice closed the gates against them, and guarded them, and would not suffer any of the King's lieges to come out and assist them. By which Lord Furnivale and his men were much impeded, and many of the King's commands remained unexecuted."¹

Of the rebellion in Wales, however, very few circumstances are recorded after Henry of Monmouth had ceased to resist the rebels in person: the war gradually dwindled, and sunk at last into insignificance. A few embers of the conflagration still remained unquenched, and called for the watchfulness of government; but the flames had been so far subdued, that all sense of danger to the general peace of the realm had been removed from the people of England. No precise date can be assigned to the last show of resistance on the part of Owyn or his followers. It must have been, at all events,

¹ MS. Donat. 4599.

later than our historians have generally supposed. About Christmas 1411 a free pardon was granted for all treasons and crimes, with an exception from the King's grace of Owyn Glyndowr himself, and one Thomas Trumpyngton, who seems to have made himself very obnoxious to the government. In the same year payment was made of various sums to defray the expenses of the late siege of Harlech, the successful issue of which the record ascribes, to the favour of God. In 1412 the King's licence was given to John Tiptoft, seneschal, and William Boteler, receiver of Brecknock, to negotiate with Owyn for the ransom of David Gamne, the gallant Welshman who afterwards fell at the battle of Agincourt. The licence was granted at the suit of Llewellyn ap Howell, David Gamne's father, and authorised the parties to offer in exchange any Welshmen whom they could take prisoners. In the same year, about Midsummer, the Pell Rolls, recording a large sum paid to the Prince for the safeguard of Wales, at the same time acquaint us with the waning state of the insurrection; for the money was to enable the Prince to resist the rebels "now seldom rising in arms."^m The same expression occurs in the following December.

Still, though their rising was even then rare, yet as late as February 19, 1414, payment is registered of a sum "to a certain Welshman coming to London, and continuing there, to give information con-

^m "Jam raro insurgentium."

cerning the proceedings and designs of Ewain Glendowrly."

We gladly bring to a close these references to the last days of the dying rebellion in Wales, by recording an act of grace on the part of Henry of Monmouth.ⁿ It was after he had returned from his victory at Agincourt, and when, notwithstanding the immense drain of men and money in his campaign in Normandy, he could doubtless have extirpated the whole remnant of the rebels, had he delighted in vengeance rather than in mercy, that he commissioned Sir Gilbert Talbot to "communicate and treat with Meredith ap Owyn, son of Owyn de Glendowrly; and as well the said Owyn, as other our rebels, to admit and receive into their allegiance, if they seek it." Probably the stubborn heart of Owyn scorned to sue for pardon, and to share the King's grace.

Of the last years of Owyn Glyndowr history furnishes us with very scanty information. It is certain that he never fell into the hands of his enemies: it is probable that, after having been compelled at length to withdraw from the hopeless struggle in which he had persevered with indomitable courage, he passed away in concealment his few remaining years of disappointment and sorrow. Tradition ventures to hint that friends in Herefordshire threw the shelter of their hospitality

ⁿ 24th February 1416.

over him in his days of distress and desolation. But history returns no satisfactory answer to our inquiries whether he was blessed with the consolations of religion in his calamity; nor whether, to lighten the dreadful vicissitudes of his eventful life, he was cheered at the close of his sorrow by any whom he loved. His reverses brought with them no ordinary degree of suffering. In the very opening of the rebellion his houses were burnt, and his lands were confiscated. His brother fell in one of the earliest engagements on the borders. In the course of the struggle,^o his wife and his children, sons and daughters, were carried away captive, and retained as prisoners. His friends were gone; many had fallen on the field of battle; many had died under the hand of the executioner; many had provided for their own safety by deserting him. Every act of grace and pardon, though it embraced

^o This is a fact, as the Author believes, new in history; which, however, is placed beyond all doubt by the Issue Rolls of the Pell Office. 1 Henry V. 27th June, money is paid to John Weele for the expenses of the wife of Owen Glendourdi, of the wife of Edmund Mortimer, and of others, their sons and daughters: "*et aliorum filiorum et filiarum suarum.*" On the 21st of March, also 1411, Lord Grey of Codnor is authorised, as we have already stated, by warrant to deliver Gryffuth ap Owyn Glyndourdy, (that is, Owyn's son Griffith,) and Owyn ap Griffith ap Rycard, to the constable of the Tower, till further orders.—MS. Donat. 4599.

This son, however, of Owyn had been a prisoner for a long time before the date of this warrant. Lord Grey had payment made for the expenses of Griffin, son of Owyn Glyndowr, as early as June 1, 1407.—Pell Rolls.

almost all besides, made an exception of his name ; till the above offer of mercy from Henry of Monmouth included Owyn himself. His sufferings were enough in number and intenseness to satisfy the vengeance of any one who was not athirst for blood.

In estimating the character of this extraordinary man, we must remember that almost the whole evidence which we have of him has been derived through the medium of his enemies : in the next place, we must not allow circumstances over which he had no control to darken his fame ; nor must our zeal in condemning the rebel, bury in oblivion the patriot, though mistaken ; or the hero, though unsuccessful.

Especially, then, must it be borne in mind, that not Henry Bolinbroke, but Richard II. was the sovereign to whom Glyndowr^p had owed and had originally sworn allegiance ; that he had been especially and confidentially employed in that unhappy monarch's immediate service ; that he was one of the very few who remained faithful to him, and accompanied him through perils and trials to the last ; and that he left him only when Richard's misfortunes prohibited his friends from giving him any longer assistance or comfort. We must remember also, that, even had his master Richard been deposed or dead, it was not Henry Bolinbroke, but the Earl of March,

^p It does not appear, whether Owyn had ever sworn allegiance to Henry IV.

whom the laws of the country had taught him to regard as his liege lord. We cannot, indeed, in honesty assign to Glyndowr the crown of martyrdom won in his country's cause; we cannot justly ascribe his career exclusively to pure patriotism: there is too much of self^a mingled in his character to justify us in enrolling him among the devoted friends of freedom, and the disinterested enemies of tyranny. He was driven into rebellion by the sense of individual injury and insult rather than of his country's wrongs; and he too eagerly assumed to himself the honours, authority, and power, as well as the title of sovereign of his native land. But he was not one of those heartless ringleaders of confusion,—he was not one of those desperate rebels with whom the English too harshly and too rashly have been wont to number him. He possessed many qualities of the hero, deserving a better cause and a better fate. It is impossible not to admire his unconquerable courage, his endurance of hardships, his faculty of making the very best of the means within his reach, and his unshrinking perseverance as long as there remained to him one ray of hope or one particle of strength. The guilt of violated faith, though laid to his charge, has never been established. He has been, moreover, often accused of cruelty, and of engaging in savage warfare; but even his enemies and conquerors, by

^a Pennant says he caused himself, in 1402, to be acknowledged Prince of Wales by his countrymen, and to be crowned also.

their actions and by their despatches, prove, that though Owyn slew, and burnt, and laid waste far and wide, yet in all this he executed only the law of retaliation, dreadful as that law is both in its principle and in its consequences.

Owyn Glyndowr failed, and he was denounced as a rebel and a traitor. But had the issue of the "sorry fight" of Shrewsbury been otherwise than it was; had Hotspur so devised, and digested, and matured his plan of operations, as to have enabled Owyn with his forces to join heart and hand in that hard-fought field; had Bolinbroke and his son^r fallen on that fatal day; — instead of lingering among his native mountains as a fugitive and a branded felon; bereft of his lands, his friends, his children and his wife; waiting only for the blow of death to terminate his earthly sufferings, and, when that blow fell, leaving no memorial^s behind him to

^r How beautifully does the poet express this same thought in the words of Harry Percy's widow :

"Had my sweet Harry had but half their numbers,
To-day might I, hanging on Hotspur's neck,
Have talked of Monmouth's grave."

Second Part of HENRY IV. act ii.

This lady, Elizabeth Percy, had probably either said or done something to excite the suspicion of the King; for he issued a warrant for her apprehension on the 8th of October, after the battle of Shrewsbury.

^s The Welsh historians tell of various traditions relating both to the place and the time of his death, adding many a romantic tale of his wanderings among the mountains, and in caves and dens of the earth. But, unable to trace any grounds

mark either the time or the place of his release,—Owyn Glyndowr might have been recognised even by England, as he actually had been by France, in the character of an independent sovereign; and his people might have celebrated his name as the avenger of his country's wrongs, the scourge of her oppressors, and the restorer of her independence. The anticipations of his own bard, Gryffydd Llydd, might have been amply realized.[†]

Strike then your harps, ye Cambrian bards !

The song of triumph best rewards

An hero's toils. Let Henry weep

His warriors wrapt in everlasting sleep :

Success and victory are thine,

Owain Glyndurdwy divine !

Dominion, honour, pleasure, praise,

Attend upon thy vigorous days.

And, when thy evening's sun is set,

May grateful Cambria ne'er forget

Thy noon-tide blaze ; but on thy tomb

Never-fading laurels bloom.

of preference for one tradition above another, the Author of these Memoirs leaves the question (in itself of no great importance), without expressing any opinion beyond what he has offered in the text. He must, however, add, that the traditions of his having passed many of his last days at the houses of Scudamore and Monnington, of his having been some time concealed in a cavern called to this day Owyn's Cave, on the coast of Merioneth, and of his having been buried in Monnington churchyard, are by no means improbable. The story of his corpse resting under a stone in the churchyard of Bangor is evidently a mistake; whilst the legend which would identify him with John of Kent seems altogether fabulous.

[†] The Author takes the translation from the Appendix to Williams' Monmouthshire.

By the obliging kindness of Sir Henry Ellis, the Author is enabled to enrich his work by authentic representations of the Great and Privy Seals of Owyn Glyndowr as Prince of Wales; he borrows at the same time the clear and scientific description of them, with which that antiquary furnished the *Archæologia*.^u The originals are appended to two instruments preserved in the Hôtel Soubise at Paris, both dated in the year 1404, and believed to relate to the furnishing of the troops which were then supplied to Owyn by the King of France.

“On the obverse of the Great Seal, Owyn is represented with a bifid beard, very similar to Richard II, seated under a canopy of Gothic tracery; the half-body of a wolf forming the arms of his chair on each side; the back-ground is ornamented with a mantle semée of lions, held up by angels. At his feet are two lions. A sceptre is in his right hand; but he has no crown. The inscription, OWENUS . . . PRINCEPS WALLIÆ. On the reverse Owyn is represented on horseback in armour: in his right hand, which is extended, he holds a sword; and with his left, his shield charged with four lions rampant: a drapery, probably a *kerchief de plesaunce*, or handkerchief won at a tournament, pendent from the right wrist. Lions rampant also appear upon the mantle of the horse. On his helmet, as well as on his horse's head, is the Welsh dragon. The area of the seal is diapered with roses. The

^u Vol. xxv.

inscription on this side seems to fill the gap upon the obverse, OWENUS DEI GRATIA . . . WALLIÆ.

The Privy Seal represents the four lions rampant, towards the spectator's left, on a shield, surmounted by an open coronet; the dragon of Wales as a supporter on the dexter side, on the sinister a lion. The inscription seems to have been SIGILLUM OWENI PRINCIPIS WALLIÆ.

No impression of this seal is probably now to be found either in Wales or England. Its workmanship shows that Owyn Glyndowr possessed a taste for art far beyond the types of the seals of his predecessors."



CHAPTER XII.

REPUTED DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HENRY AND HIS FATHER EXAMINED. — HE IS MADE CAPTAIN OF CALAIS. — HIS RESIDENCE AT COLDHARBOUR. — PRESIDES AT THE COUNCIL-BOARD. — CORDIALITY STILL VISIBLE BETWEEN HIM AND HIS FATHER. — AFFRAY IN EAST-CHEAP. — NO MENTION OF HENRY'S PRESENCE. — PROJECTED MARRIAGE BETWEEN HENRY AND A DAUGHTER OF BURGUNDY. — CHARGE AGAINST HENRY FOR ACTING IN OPPOSITION TO HIS FATHER IN THE QUARREL OF THE DUKES OF BURGUNDY AND ORLEANS UNFOUNDED.

1409 — 1412.

HENRY of Monmouth, whose years, from the earliest opening of youth to the entrance of manhood, had chiefly been occupied within the precincts of his own Principality in quelling the spirit of rebellion which had burst forth there with great fury, and had been protracted with a vitality almost incredible, is from this date to be viewed and examined under a totally different combination of circumstances. Early in the year 1409 he was appointed Warden of the Cinque Ports and Constable of Dover for life, with a salary of 300*l.* a year. Thomas Erpyngham, “the King's beloved

and faithful knight," who held those offices by patent, having resigned them in favour of the King's "very dear son."^a He was made on the 18th of March 1410, Captain of Calais, by writ of privy seal; and he was constituted also President of the King's Council.

The character of Henry having been assailed, not only in times distant from our own, but by writers also of the present age, on the ground of his having behaved towards his father with unkindness and cruelty after the date of his appointment to these offices, it becomes necessary, in order to ascertain the reality of the charge and its extent, as well as the time to which his change of behaviour is to be referred, to trace his footsteps in all his personal transactions with his father, and in the management of the public affairs of the realm, more narrowly than it might otherwise have been necessary or interesting for us to do. Every incidental circumstance which can throw any light on this uncertain and perplexing page of his history becomes invested with an interest beyond its own intrinsic importance, just as in a judicial investigation, where the animus of any party bears upon the question at issue, the most minute and trifling particular will often give a clue, whilst broad and striking events may not assist in relieving the judge from any portion of his doubts. On this principle the following facts are inserted here. They may perhaps appear

^a MS. Donat. 4599.

too disjointed for a continuous narrative; and they are cited only as separate links which might form a chain of evidence all bearing upon the question as to Henry's position from this time with his father.

Early in the year 1409, the King, in a letter to the Pope, when speaking of the Cardinal of Bourdeaux, says, "He came into the presence of us and of our first-born son, the Prince of Wales, and others, our prelates." At this period we are informed by the dry details of the royal exchequer, that the King was anxiously bent on the marriage of his son. To Sir William Bouchier payment is made, (17th May 1409,) on account of a voyage to Denmark and Norway, to treat with Isabella, Queen of Denmark, for a marriage between the Lord Henry, Prince of Wales, and the daughter of Philippa of Denmark; and on the 23rd of the same month^b a payment is made to "Hugh Mortimer, Esq., lately twice sent by the King's command to France, to enter into a contract of marriage between the Prince and the second daughter of the King's adversary, the King of France." In the August of 1409 the council assembled at Westminster, resolved, with regard to Ireland, that, should it be agreeable to the King and the Lord Thomas, it would be expedient for Lord John Stanley to be appointed Lieutenant, he paying a stipulated sum every year to the Lord Thomas. Before the council broke up, the Prince,

^b The payments prove nothing as to the dates of the debts incurred.

who presided, undertook to speak on this subject, as well to the King his father, as to his brother the Lord Thomas. At this time it would appear that, so far from any coldness, and jealousies, and suspicions existing between the Prince and the members of his family, he was deemed the most fit person to negotiate an affair of much delicacy between the council and his father and his brother.

On the 31st of January 1410, the King, in the palace of Lambeth, "delivered the great seals to Thomas Beaufort, his brother, in the presence of the Archbishop, Henry of York, and my lord the Prince."^c On the 5th of March following, the King's warrant was signed for the burning of John Badley. The Prince's conduct on that occasion, which has been strangely misrepresented, but which seems at all events to testify to the kindness of his disposition, and his anxiety to save a fellow-creature from suffering, is examined at some length in another part of this work, where his character is investigated with reference to the sweeping charge brought against him of being a religious persecutor. On the 18th of that month, when he was appointed Captain of Calais, his father at the same time made him a present for life of his house called Coldharbour. It must be here observed that the disagreement which evidently

^c These insulated facts may be thought to prove little of themselves; but they throw light (it is presumed) both on Henry of Monmouth's occupations, through these years of his life, and especially on the point of any rupture existing between himself and the King his father.

arose and continued for some time between the King and the Commons, though the Prince was compelled to take a part in it, seems not to have shaken the King's confidence in him, nor to have alienated his affections from him at all. On the 23rd of March the Commons require the King to appoint a council; and on Friday, the 2nd of May following, they ask the King to inform them of the names of his council: on which occasion this remarkable circumstance occurred.^d The King replied that many had been excused; that the others were the Prince, the Bishops of Worcester, Durham, and Bath, Lords Arundel, Westmoreland, and Burnell. The Prince then, in the name of all, prayed to be excused, if there would not be found money sufficient to defray the necessary charges; and, should nothing adequate be granted, then that they should at the end of the parliament be discharged from all expenses incurred by them. Upon this they resolved that the Prince should not be sworn as a member of the council, because of the high dignity of his honourable person. The other members were sworn. It is to this stipulation of the Prince that the King refers at the close of the parliament in 1411, when, after the Commons had prayed the King to thank the Prince and council, he says, "I am persuaded they would have done more had they had more ample means, as my lord the Prince declared when they were appointed."

^d Parl. Rolls, 1410.

It has often been a subject of wonder what should have brought the Prince and his brother so often into East-Cheap; and the story of the Boar's Head in Shakspeare has long associated in our minds Henry Prince of Wales with a low and vulgar part of London, in which he could have had no engagement worthy of his station, and to which, therefore, he must have resorted only for the purposes of riot and revelry with his unworthy and dissolute companions. History records nothing of the Prince derogatory to his princely and Christian character during his residence in Coldharbour; it does indeed charge two of the King's sons with a riot there, but they are stated by name to be Thomas and John. Henry's name does not occur at all in connexion with any disturbance or mis-doing. The fact, however, (not generally known,) of Henry having his own house, the gift of his father, in the heart of London, near East-Cheap, (the scene indeed of Shakspeare's poetical romance, but really the frequent place of meeting for the King's council whilst Henry was their president,) might seem to call for a few words as to the locality of Coldharbour and its circumstances. The grant by his father of this mansion, dated Westminster, March 18th, 1410, is couched in these words: "Know ye, that, of our especial grace, we have granted to our dearest son, Henry Prince of Wales, a certain hostel or place called Coldharbour, in our city of London, with its appurtenances, to hold for the

term of his life, without any payment to us for the same.”^e These premises, we learn, came into Henry IV.’s possession by the right of his wife. Stowe, who supplies the materials from which we safely make that inference, does not seem to have been aware that it was ever in the possession of either that King or his son. He tells us it was bought in the 8th of Edward III. by John Poultney, who was four times mayor, and who lived there when it was called Poultney Inn. But, thirteen years afterward (21 Edward III.), he, by charter, gave and confirmed it to Humfrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford and Essex, as “his whole tenement called Coldharbour, with all the tenements and key adjoining, on the way called Haywharf Lane (All Saints ad fœnum), for a rose at Midsummer, if demanded. In 1397, John Holland, Earl of Huntingdon, lodged there; and Richard II, his brother, dined with him. It was then counted a right fair and stately house.”^f

We are led to infer, though the formal grant of this house to Prince Henry was made only in the March of this year, yet that it had been his residence for some time previously; for, on the 8th of the preceding February, we find a council held there, himself present as its chief.

It does not appear by any positive statement that the Prince visited Calais immediately on his ap-

^e Rym. Fœd. vol. vii.

^f Stowe’s London, ii. 206.

pointment to its captaincy, but we shall probably be safe in concluding that he did so ; for, very soon afterwards, we find letters of protection^g for one year (from April 23) given to Thomas Selby, who was to go with the Prince, and remain with him at Calais. At all events, he was resident in London by the middle of June, and had apparently engaged most actively in the affairs of government. On the 16th of that month we find him president at two sittings of the council on the same day :^h the first at Coldharbour, in which it was determined that three parts of the subsidy granted to the King on wools, hides, &c. should be applied to the payment of the garrison of Calais and of the marches thereof; the second, at the Convent of the Preaching Friars, when an ordinance was made for the payment of the garrison of Berwick and the East March of Scotland.

The Prince presided at a council, on the 18th of June, in Westminster; and, on the 19th, in the house of the Bishop of Hereford. To this council his brother Thomas of Lancaster presented a petition praying for reformation of certain tallies, by default of which he could not obtain the money due to him. The preamble, as well as the body of this petition, proves that at this time the Prince was regarded not merely as a member of the council, but as its president, to be named and addressed

^g Rymer's Fæd.

^h Acts of Council.

individually and in contradistinction to the other members. "The petition of my lord Thomas of Lancaster, made to the very honourable and puissant lord the Prince, and the other very honourable and wise lords of the council of our sovereign lord the King. First, may it please my said lord the Prince, and the other lords of the council," &c. — That up to this time no jealousy had arisen in the King's mind in consequence of the growing popularity and ascendancy of his son, is evidenced by the record of the same council. That document tells us plainly that the King was cordial with him, and employed him as his confidential representative: it shall speak for itself. "And then my said lord the Prince reported to the other members of the council, that he had it in command from his very good lord and father to ordain, with the advice of the others of the said council, that the Lord Thomas Beaufort, brother of our said lord the King and his chancellor of England, should have such gratuity for one year beyond his fees as to them should seem reasonable. On which, by our said lord the Prince, and all the others, it was agreed that the said chancellor should receive for one year, from the day of his appointment, 800 marks."

The next council, at which also we find the Prince acting as president, was held on the 11th of July. Between the dates of these two last councils, that disturbance in the street took place which the Chronicle of London refers to merely as "an

affray in East-Cheap between the townsmen and the Princes Thomas and John;" but which Stowe records with much of detail and minuteness. Many, it is believed, may be disposed to regard it as the foundation chosen by Shakspeare on which to build the superstructure of his own fascinating imagination, and on which other writers more grave, though not more trustworthy as historians, have rested for conclusive evidence of the wild frolics and "madcap" adventures of Henry of Monmouth. Stowe's account is this: "In the year 1410, upon the eve of St. John the Baptist, (i. e. June 23,) the King's sons, Thomas and John, being in East-Cheap at supper, or rather at breakfast, (for it was after the watch was broken up, betwixt two and three of the clock after midnight,) a great debate happened between their men and other of the court, which lasted an hour, even till the mayor and sheriffs, with other citizens, appeased the same: for the which afterwards the said mayor, aldermen, and sheriffs were sent for to answer before the King; his sons and divers lords being highly moved against the city. At which time, William Gascoigne, chief justice, required the mayor and aldermen, for the citizens, to put them in the King's grace.ⁱ Whereunto they answered that they had not offended, but according to the law had done their best in stinting debate and maintaining of the peace: upon

ⁱ That is, that they should ask the King's pardon.

which answer the King remitted all his ire and dismissed them." It must be observed that not one word is here said of Prince Henry having anything whatever to do with the affray: whether "other of the court" meant some of his household, or not, does not appear; neither are we told that the two brothers had been supping with the Prince. And yet, unless some facts are alleged by which the mayor and the chief justice may be connected with him in reference to some broil, we may well question whether the current stories relating to his East-Cheap revelries have any other foundation than this. At all events, the Prince seems to have been most regular during this summer in his attendance at the council-board. On the 22nd, 29th, 30th of July, we find him acting as president. The last council was held at the house of Robert Lovell, Esq. near Old Fish Street in London; at which 1400*l.* was voted to the Prince for the safeguard of Calais, to be repaid out of the first receipts from the duties on wools and skins.^k

On the 18th of November we find a mandate directed to the Prince, as Warden of the Cinque Ports, to see justice done in a case of piracy; and on the 29th, the King, being then at Leicester, issues to Henry the Prince, as Captain of Calais, and to his lieutenant, the same commission, to grant

^k On the 7th of September the King commissions his very dear son the Prince, or his lieutenant, to punish the rebels of Wales.

safe-conducts, as had been given to John Earl of Somerset, the late captain.¹

Where the Prince passed the winter does not seem to be recorded. In the following spring we find this minute of council. "Be it remembered, that on Thursday, the 19th of March, in the twelfth year of our sovereign lord the King, at Lambeth, in presence of our said lord the King, and his very dear son my lord the Prince, the following prelates and other lords were assembled."^m It cannot escape observation, that, instead of the Prince being mentioned as one of the council, or as their president, his name is coupled with the King's as one of the two in whose presence the others were assembled.ⁿ

¹ The Earl died on Palm Sunday, 16th of March 1410; immediately on whose demise the Prince was appointed captain. Minutes of Council, 16th June 1410.

^m There are many curious items of expenditure in the minutes of this council; one which few perhaps would have expected: "Item, to John Rys, for the lions in his custody per annum 120*l*."

ⁿ In a minute of the council, about April this year, we find an item of expense which proves that Wales still required the presence of a considerable force: "Item, to my lord the Prince, for the wages of three hundred men-at-arms and six hundred archers who have lived and will live for the safeguard of the Welsh parts, from the 9th day of July 1410, to the 7th day of April then next ensuing, 8000*l*."

In this month the King implores the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to pray for him, and to urge all their clergy to supplicate God's help and protection of himself, his children, and his realm. And many prayers, and processions, and masses are ordered; and all in so urgent a manner as would

Early in the autumn of this year a négociation was set on foot for a marriage between Prince Henry and the daughter of the Duke of Burgundy. Ambassadors were appointed for carrying on the treaty; and on September 1st, 1411, instructions were given to the Bishop of St. David's, the Earl of Arundel, Lord Francis de Court, Hugh Mortimer, Esq. and John Catryk, Clerk, or any two or more of them, how to negotiate without finally concluding the treaty, and to report to the King and Prince.

The instructions may be examined at full length in Sir Harris Nicolas' "Acts of the Privy Council"

lead us to think that there was some especial cause of anxiety and alarm, or some severe affliction present or feared. — Rymer.

On the 18th of August, a warrant is issued for the liberation of Llewellyn ap David Whyht, and Yon ap Griffith ap Lli, from the Tower.—MS. Donat. 4599.

In the parliament, at the close of this year, grievous complaints are made by the Border counties against the violence and ravages and extortions of the Welsh; and an order is sought "to arrest the cousins of all rebels and evil-doers of the Welsh, until the malefactors yield themselves up; for by such kinsmen only are they supported."

The cruelties of the Welsh are described in very strong colours by the petitioners; but it is not evident what was the result of their prayer. The rebels and robbers, they say, carry the English off into woods and deserts, and tie them to trees, and keep them, as in prison, for three or four months, till they are ransomed at the utmost value of their goods; and yet these malefactors were pardoned by the lords of the marches. The petitioners pray for more summary justice. Rolls of Parl.

by any who may feel an interest in them independently of Henry of Monmouth's character and proceedings; to others the first paragraph will sufficiently indicate the tenour of the whole document. "First, inasmuch as our sovereign lord the King, by the report of the message of the Duke of Burgundy, understood that the Duke entertains a great affection and desire to have an alliance with our said sovereign by means of a marriage to be contracted, God willing, between our redoubted lord the Prince and the daughter of the aforesaid Duke, the King wishes that his said ambassadors should first of all demand of the Duke his daughter, to be given to my lord the Prince; and that after they have heard what the Duke will offer on account of the said marriage, whether by grant of lands and possessions, or of goods and jewels, and according to the greatest offer which by this negociation might be made by one party or the other, a report be made of that to our said lord the King and our said lord the Prince by the ambassadors." The other instructions relate rather to political stipulations than pecuniary arrangements. These negotiations met with the fate they merited; and all idea of a marriage between the Prince and the daughter of the Duke of Burgundy was abandoned. But since Henry's behaviour in the transaction has been urged as proof of his having then discarded parental authority, and acted for himself in contravention of his father's wishes, thereby incurring his royal dis-

pleasure, and sowing the seeds of that state of mutual dissatisfaction, and jealousy, and strife, which is said to have grown up afterwards into a harvest of bitterness, the subject assumes greater importance to those who are anxiously tracing Henry's real character; and must be examined and sifted with care, and patience, and candour.

The question involved is this: "In the quarrel between the Dukes of Burgundy and Orleans, did Prince Henry send the first troops from his own forces under the command of his own friends to the aid of the Duke of Burgundy, against the express wishes of his father; or did the contradictory measures of England in first succouring the Duke of Burgundy, and then the Duke of Orleans his antagonist, arise from a change of policy in the King himself and the English government, without implying undutiful conduct on the part of the Prince, or dissatisfaction in his father towards him?" The former view has been recommended for adoption, though it reflects upon the Prince's character as a son; and it has been thereupon suggested that, "instead of denying his previous faults, we should recollect his sudden and earnest reformation, and the new direction of his feelings and character, as the mode more beneficial to his memory."^o But in this work, which professes not to search for exculpation, nor to deal in eulogy, but to seek the truth, and follow it to whatever conse-

^o Turner's Hist. Eng.

quences it might lead, we must on no account so hastily acquiesce in the assumption that Henry of Monmouth was on this occasion undutifully opposed to his father.^p However rejoiced we may be to find in a fellow-Christian the example of a sincere penitent growing in grace, it cannot be right to multiply or aggravate his faults for the purpose of making his conversion more striking and complete. We may firmly hope that, if he had been a disobedient and unkind son in any one particular, he repented truly of that fault. But his biographer must sift the evidence adduced in proof of the alleged delinquency; instead of admitting on insufficient ground an allegation, in order to assimilate his character to general fame, or to heighten the dramatic effect of his subsequent course of virtue.

In discussing this question it will be necessary to attend with care to the order and date of each circumstance. By a temporary forgetfulness of this indispensable part of an historian's duty, the writers who have adopted the view most adverse to Henry as a son, have been led to give an incorrect view of the whole transaction, especially as it affects the character and filial conduct of the Prince.

The first application for aid was made to the King by the Duke of Burgundy, who offered at the

^p The character of the manuscript, on the authority of which this and another charge against Henry of Monmouth have been grounded, will be examined at length, as to its genuineness and authenticity in the Appendix.

same time his daughter in marriage to the Prince. This was in August 1411; and doubtless, if he found the King backward or unfavourably inclined, he would naturally apply to the Prince for his good offices, who was personally most interested in the result of the negociation; not to induce him to act against his father, but to prevail upon his father to agree to the proposal. This course was, we are told, actually pursued, and Prince Henry was allowed by his father to send some forces immediately to strengthen the ranks of Burgundy. They joined his army, and remained at Paris till provisions became so dear that they resolved to procure them from the enemy, who were stationed at St. Cloud. Here, at the broken bridge, the two parties engaged; and Burgundy, by the help of the English auxiliaries, completely routed the Duke of Orleans' forces. The English subsequently received their pay; and, their services being no longer required, returned at their leisure by Calais to their own country. The Duke of Orleans learning that these troops were dismissed unceremoniously by his antagonist, and conceiving that Henry's resentment of the indignity might make for him a favourable opening, despatched ambassadors to England with most magnificent offers; but this was not till the beginning of the next year after the battle of St. Cloud, which took place^a on the 10th November 1411. That the King himself con-

^a Monstrelet says distinctly, that the Duke of Burgundy left Paris, at midnight, on the 9th of November.

templated the expediency of sending auxiliaries to the Duke of Burgundy in the beginning of September, is put beyond doubt by the instructions given to the ambassadors. Even so late as February 10, 1412, the King issued a commission to Lord Grey, the Bishop of Durham, and others, not only to treat for the marriage of the Prince with that Duke's daughter, but to negotiate with him also on mutual alliances and confederacies, and on the course of trade between England and Flanders; the King having previously, on the 11th of January, signed letters patent, to remain in force till the Feast of Pentecost, for the safe conduct and protection of the Duke's ambassadors with one hundred men. With a view of enabling the reader more satisfactorily to form his own judgment on the validity of this charge of unfilial and selfwilled conduct on the part of Henry of Monmouth, the Author is induced, instead of confining himself to the general statement of his own views, or of the considerations on which his conclusion has been built, to cite the evidence separately of several authors who have recorded the proceedings. He trusts the importance of the point at issue will be thought to justify the detail.

Walsingham, who is in some points very minute when describing these transactions, so as even to record the very words employed by the King on the first application of the Duke, does not mention the name of the Prince of Wales throughout. He repre-

sents the King as having recommended the Duke to try measures of mutual forgiveness and reconciliation; at all events, to let the fault of encouraging civil discord be with his adversaries; but withal promising, in case of the failure of that plan, to send the aid he desired. The same writer states the mission of the Earl of Arundel, Lord Kyme, Lord Cobham, (Sir John Oldcastle,) and others, with an army, as the consequence of this engagement on the part of the King.^r He then tells us that, in the next year after these forces had been dismissed by the Duke of Burgundy, the Duke of Orleans made application to the King.

Elmham, who mentions the successful application of Burgundy to the Prince, and the consequent mission of an English force, represents the Prince as having recommended himself more than ever to his royal father on that occasion.^s

Titus Livius, who says that the Duke of Burgundy applied to the Prince, and that he sent some

^r “*Transmissi sunt ergo;*” without the slightest intimation of any interference on the part of the Prince.

^s These chroniclers show clearly the general opinion in their day to have been that there was for a time an alienation of affection between Henry and his father, brought about by envious calumniators; but that they were soon cordially reconciled: “*Non obstante quorundam detractatione et accusatione multiplici, ipse, invidis renitentibus, suæ piissimæ benignitatis mediis, &c*”. Elmham, thus ascribes the cause of the temporary interruption of cordiality to the malice of detractors, and its final and lasting restoration to Henry’s filial and affectionate kindness.

of his own men to succour him, distinctly tells us that he did it with the good-will and consent of his father. He adds, (what could have originated only in an oversight of dates,) that the Prince was made, in consequence of his conduct on this occasion, the chief of the council, and was always called the dear and beloved son of his father. He intimates, (but very obscurely,) that, by the aspersions of some, his fame sustained for a short time some blemish in this point.^t

Polydore Vergil^u says distinctly that, on the Duke of Burgundy first opening the negotiation, the King, anticipating good to himself from the quarrels of his neighbours, willingly promised aid, and as soon as possible sent a strong force to succour him. He then records the victory gained by Burgundy at the Bridge of St. Cloud, and the dismissal of his English allies with presents; adding, that King Henry thought it a weakness in him to send them home prematurely, before he had finished the struggle.

^t “Etsi nonnullorum detrectationibus in hoc *aliquantisper* fama sua læsa fuerit.” Some writers have built very unadvisedly on this expression. It is at best obscure, and capable of a very different interpretation; and, even at the most, it only implies that the Prince was then the object of calumny at the hand of some persons who could not effect any lasting wound on his fame.

^u The testimony of these later authors is only valuable so far as they are believed to have been faithful in copying the accounts, or extracting from the statements, of preceding writings, the works of many of whom have not come down to our times.

And when the Duke of Orleans, on hearing of this hasty dismissal, entered upon a counter negotiation, the King willingly listened to his proposals, having felt hurt at the conduct of the Duke of Burgundy towards those English auxiliaries.

The Chronicle of London tells us that, when the King would grant no men to the Duke of Burgundy, he applied to the Prince, "who sent the Earl of Arundel and the Lord Cobham, with other lords and gentles, with a fair retinue and well-arrayed people."

Whilst we remark that in these several accounts no allusion whatever is made to any opposition to his father on the part of the Prince, or any sign of displeasure on the part of the King in this particular point of his conduct, the simple facts are decidedly against the supposition of any such unsatisfactory proceeding. In February 1412, more than three months after the Earl of Arundel's dismissal by the Duke of Burgundy, the King was still engaged in negotiations with that Duke: nor was it till three months after that,—not till May 18th,—that the final treaty between the King and the Duke of Orleans was signed.^x And it is very remarkable that, within two days, the Prince^y him-

^x The King had issued a proclamation at Canterbury, addressed to all sheriffs, and to the Captain also of Calais, forbidding his subjects of any condition or degree whatsoever to interfere in this foreign quarrel. April 10, 1412.

^y Rymer Fœd.

self, as well as his three brothers, in the presence of their father, solemnly undertook to be parties to that treaty, and to abide faithfully by its provisions.

We are compelled, then, to infer, that there is no evidence whatever of Prince Henry having acted in this affair in contravention of his father's will. He very probably used his influence to persuade the King, and was successful. And as to the application having been made to him by the Duke of Burgundy, and not to the King, we must bear in mind that, at this period, it was to him that even his brother Thomas presented his petition, and not to his father; and that the Pope sent his commendatory letters to him, and not to the King.²

The French historians, though their attention has naturally been drawn to the introduction of English auxiliaries into the land of France, rather than to the authority by which they were commissioned, enable us to acquiesce with increased satisfaction in the conclusion to which we have arrived. Whether contemporary or modern,^a they seem all to have considered the original mission of Lord Arundel and the troops under his command as the act of King Henry IV. himself.^b They inform us, more-

² On February 9th, in the third year of his pontificate (1413), Pope John recommends John Bremor to the kind offices of the Prince; and, on the kalends of March (1st of March), the same pontiff sent Dr. Richard Derham with a message to him by word of mouth.

^a M. Petitot.

^b Jean Le Fevre, Morice, Lobineau.

over, that, on the arrival in England of the subsequent embassy of the Duke of Burgundy, so late as March 1412,^c his representatives were received with every mark of respect and cordiality, not only by the Prince, but by the King also, and his other sons. They lead us also to infer that, when the confederate French princes made their application for succours "to the King and his second son,"^d the Prince withheld his concurrence from the change of conduct adopted by his father, and endeavoured to the utmost of his power to prevent the contemplated expedition under the Duke of Clarence from being carried into effect. A comparison of these authors with our own undisputed documents supplies a very intelligible and consistent view of the whole transaction; and so far from representing Henry of Monmouth as an undutiful son, obstinately bent on pursuing his own career, reckless of his father's wishes, bears incidental testimony both to his steadiness of purpose, and to his unwillingness to act in opposition to his father. In conjunction with the King he originally espoused the cause of Burgundy, and was afterwards averse from deserting their ally. He was anxious also to dissuade his father from adopting that vacillating policy on which he saw him bent. But within two days after the King had irrevocably taken his final resolve, and had joined himself to the Duke of Orleans, and the other confederated princes by a league, offensive and defensive,

^c Monstrelet.

^d Laboureur.

against the Duke of Burgundy, instead of persevering in his opposition to that measure, or defying his father's authority, within two days he made himself a party to that league, and pledged his faith to observe it.

Although Prince Henry seems to have had little to do with these continental expeditions beyond the first mission of Lord Arundel and his forces, yet it is impossible not to suspect (as the French at the time anticipated) that this decided interference, on the part of England, with the affairs of France, may have been a prelude to the enterprise of the next reign. Who can say that the battle and victory at St. Cloud passed away without any influence on the course of events which made Henry V. heir to the King of France?

We must not leave the mention of this battle without repeating the testimony borne by the chroniclers of the day to the courage and humanity of the English, though we lament, at the same time, the act of cruelty on the part of the French, with which the character of our forefathers stands in such strong contrast. When the victory was won, the Duke of Burgundy, with the usual ferocity of civil warfare, commanded his officers to put their prisoners to death. The English generals resisted this sanguinary mandate,* declaring they would die with their

* Hardyng has thus recorded this gratifying exhibition of generous feeling and noble resolve on the part of the English:

“ He

captives rather than see them murdered; at the same time forming their men in battle-array to support, with their lives, their noble resolution.

It was about the Feast of the Assumption (August 25) that the King sent his son Thomas Duke of Clarence^f to aid the Duke of Orleans against the Duke of Burgundy: "many persons," says Walsingham, "wondering what could be the sudden change,

" He commanded then eche capitayn
His prisoners to kill them in certayn.
To which, Gilbert Umfreuile, Erle of Kyme,
Answered for all his fellowes and their men,
They should all die together at a tyme
Ere theyr prisoners so shulde be slayn then;
And, with that, took the field as folk did ken,
With all theyr men and all theyr prysoners,
To die with them, as worship it requires.
He said they were not come thyther as bouchers
To kyll the folke in market or in feire,
Nor them to sell; but, as arms requires,
Them to gouern without any dispeyre."

Hardyng's Chron.

^f There is some discrepancy in the accounts of the time of Clarence's departure. The Chronicle of London puts it nearly a month earlier than Walsingham: "And then rode Thomas, the King's son, Duke of Clarence, and with him the Duke of York, and Beauford, then Earl of Dorset, towards [South] Hampton with a great retinue of people; and on Tuesday rode the Earl's brother of Oxenford, and on the Wednesday rode the Earl of Oxenford; and they all lay at Hampton, and abode in the wynde till on the Thursday, the 1st day of August. The which Thursday, Friday, and Saturday they passed out of the haven xiiii ships, — were driven back on Sunday, — and after landed at St. Fasters, near Hagges, in Normandy."

that in so short a space of time the English should support two opposite contending parties." The Duke of Orleans failed to join them in time, and the English committed many depredations as in an enemy's country. At last, the two generals meeting, the Duke of Orleans consented to pay a large sum to the Duke of Clarence on condition that the English should evacuate the country : and the Earl of Angouleme^s was given as a hostage for the due payment of the stipulated sum. The Duke of Clarence did not return to England till after his father's death.

^s In the "Additional Charters," now in the British Museum, purchased of the Baron de Joursanvault, we find letters patent from Charles VI, reciting that, by his permission, a treaty had been made with the Duke of Clarence and other English, who agreed to evacuate the country without making war ; the Duke of Orleans giving to them the Earl of Angouleme as a hostage, for whose ransom the Duke was put to vast charges. Letters also are preserved from the Duke to his chancellor, reciting that a large sum was to be paid to the English, and in particular a hundred crowns of gold were to be paid to John Seurmaistre, chancellor of the Duke of Clarence, who was going to Rome on the affairs of the Duke of Clarence. This bears date, Blois, Nov. 20, 1412. His mission to Rome was, no doubt, to negotiate for the dispensation necessary to enable the Duke to marry his uncle's widow. In the March of the next year, the same document acquaints us with the present of a head-dress from the Duke of Orleans to that lady, then Duchess of Clarence.

CHAPTER XIII.

UNFOUNDED CHARGE AGAINST HENRY OF PECULATION. — STILL MORE SERIOUS ACCUSATION OF A CRUEL ATTEMPT TO DE-THRONE HIS DISEASED FATHER. — THE QUESTION FULLY EXAMINED. — PROBABLY A SERIOUS THOUGH TEMPORARY MISUNDERSTANDING AT THIS TIME BETWEEN THE KING AND HIS SON. — HENRY'S CONDUCT FILIAL, OPEN, AND MERCIFUL. — THE "CHAMBER" OR THE "CROWN SCENE." — DEATH OF HENRY THE FOURTH.

1412 — 1413.

Two other accusations brought against the fair fame of Henry of Monmouth in reference to his conduct in the very year before his accession to the throne, must be now carefully weighed. The first, indeed, is fully refuted by the selfsame page of our records which contains it : the second, unless some new light could be thrown upon this dark and mysterious page of his life, can scarcely have failed to make an unfavourable impression on the minds of every one whose heart has ever felt the bond of filial duty and affection.

With regard to the first accusation, we cannot do better than quote the words of the antiquary who has first brought both the calumnious charge and its

refutation to light. "The general impression (says that writer) which exists respecting the character of Henry V, and especially whilst Prince of Wales, is so opposed to the idea that he could possibly be suspected of a pecuniary fraud, that it excites surprise that he should have been accused of appropriating to his own use the money which he had received for the payment of his soldiers. In the Minutes of the Council, between July and September 1412, the following entry occurs: 'Because my lord the Prince, Captain of the town of Calais, is slandered in the said town and elsewhere, that he should have received many large sums of money for the payment of his soldiers, and that those sums have not been distributed among them, the contrary is proved by two rolls of paper being in the council, and sent by my said lord the Prince; it is ordered that letters be issued under the privy seal, explanatory of the fact respecting the Prince in that matter.'"

Although it may excite our wonder that the character of Henry of Monmouth should have been assailed for appropriating to other purposes money received for the payment of his troops, yet such an acquaintance with the exhausted state of the treasury of England at that day, as even these pages afford, will diminish the surprise * The probability

* The Prince's appointment (when he took charge of the town) is dated March 18, 1410, which was the Tuesday before Easter; at which time there was due a debt, incurred before Henry had anything whatever to do with Calais, of not less than 9000*l*.—Minutes of Council, 30th July 1410.

is, that, of the "large sums" voted by parliament, a very small proportion only was immediately forthcoming; and that, as in Wales, so in Calais, he could with great difficulty gather from that exhausted source enough from time to time to keep his men together. Persons not acquainted with this fact, hearing of the large sums voted, might naturally suspect that there was not altogether fair and upright dealing. However, the above extract is the only document known on the subject; and the same sentence which records the "slander," contains also his acquittal. He had forwarded his debtor and creditor account in two rolls, and by them it was proved that the slander was unfounded; and a writ of privy seal declaring his innocence was immediately issued. The fact is, that, at that very time, there was due to the Prince for Calais no less a sum than 8689*l.* 12*s.*; besides the sum of 1200*l.* due for the wages of sixty men-at-arms and one hundred and twenty archers, who were still living at Kymmere and Bala for the safeguard of Wales; whilst the council at the same time declared, that they knew not how to raise the money for the wages of the men who were with the Prince. The affairs of Calais seem to have fallen into some confusion before the Prince was appointed Captain, as the Minutes of Council speak of the ancient debts incurred whilst the Earl of Somerset was captain, as well as the more recent expenses; and record that Robert Thorley, the treasurer, and Richard Clithe-

rowe, victualler, were charged to come, with their accounts written out, on the morrow of All Souls next ensuing, specifying the persons to whom the several sums were paid, and the dates of payment. The King, also, in a council at Merton, on October 21st, orders certain changes to be made in the mode of collecting the duties on skins and wools; "to the intent that my lord the Prince, as Captain of the town of Calais, may the more readily receive payment of the arrears due to him and his soldiers, living there for the safeguard of the said town." We have seen that, in Wales, the Prince was driven by necessity to pawn the few jewels in his possession, in order to pay the soldiers under him; and, as Captain of Calais, he appears to have had a great difficulty in obtaining payment of the sums assigned to him.^b No one can any longer wonder that the soldiers were not paid, or that their complaints should offer themselves in the form of accusation. The Prince stands entirely free from blame, and clear of all suspicion of misdoing.

Though these causes are of themselves more than enough to account for the depressed state of Henry of Monmouth's finances; yet there was another drain, the pecuniary difficulties of his father, which, though hitherto unnoticed, must not be suppressed in these

^b Within a year of the Prince's accession to the throne, the Pell Rolls, January 27, 1414, record the payment of 826*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* to the Bishop of Winchester, lent to the King when he was Prince of Wales.

Memoirs. It is not necessary more than to refer to the causes of the pecuniary difficulties of Henry IV ; as the public and authentic documents of his reign suggest a suspicion of want of economy in his more domestic expenditure, and leave no doubt as to the extent to which he endeavoured to meet his increasing wants by loans from spiritual and municipal bodies, as well as from individuals. Among others, his son Henry's name occurs, not once or twice, but repeatedly. Whilst some loans, with reference to the then value of money, must be considered large ; others cannot fail to excite surprise from the smallness of their amount.*

A charge, however, more vitally affecting Henry's character than any other by which it has ever been assailed, requires now a patient and thorough investigation. The groundwork, indeed, upon which the accusation is built, is of great antiquity, though the superstructure is of very recent date. Were it sufficient for a biographer, who would deal uprightly, merely to contradict the evidence by demonstrating its inconsistency with indisputable facts, the business of refutation in this instance would be brief, as the accusation breaks down in every particular, from whatever point of view we may examine it. But the province of these Memoirs must not be so confined. To establish the truth in these points satisfactorily, as well

* Pell Rolls, 9 Hen. IV. 17th July, &c.

as to place clearly before the mind the total inadequacy of the evidence to substantiate the charge, will require a more full and detailed examination of the value of the Manuscript on which the charge is made to rest, than could be conveniently introduced into the body of this narrative. The whole is therefore reserved for the Appendix; and to a careful, dispassionate weighing of the arguments there adduced, the reader is earnestly invited.

But the Author, as he has above intimated, does not think his duty would be performed were he merely to prove that the charge against Henry is altogether untenable upon the evidence adduced; though that is all which the accusation so unsparingly now in these late years brought against him requires or deserves. The very allusion to such an offence as undutiful, unfilial conduct in one whose life is otherwise an example of obedience, respect, and affection towards his father, requires the biographer to take up the province of inquisitor, and ascertain what ground there may be, independently of that inadequate evidence alleged by others, for believing Henry to have once at least, and for a time, forgotten the duties of a son; or what proceedings, not involving his guilt, might have given rise to the unfounded rumour, and of what satisfactory explanation they may admit.

The charge is this: That, in the parliament held in November 1411, Prince Henry desired of his father the resignation of his crown, on the plea that the

malady under which the King was suffering would not allow him to rule any longer for the honour and welfare of the kingdom. On the King's firm and peremptory refusal, the Prince, greatly offended, withdrew from the court, and formed an overwhelming party of his own among the nobility and gentry of the land, "associating them to his dominion in homage and pay." Such is the statement made (not indeed in the form of an accusation, but merely as one of the occurrences of the year,) in the manuscript above referred to. The modern comment upon this text would probably never have been made, if the writer had given more time and patient investigation to the subject; and now, were such a suppression compatible with the thorough sifting of Henry's character and conduct, the quotation of it might well have been spared in these pages. A few words, however, on that comment, and recently renewed charge, seem indispensable. "The King's subsequent death (such are the words of the modern historian) prevented the final explosion of this unfilial conduct, which, as thus stated, deserves the denomination of an unnatural rebellion; and shows that the dissolute companion of Falstaff was not the gay and thoughtless youth which his dramatic representation exhibits to us, but that, amid his vicious gaieties, he could cherish feelings which too much resemble the unprincipled ambition of a Catilinarian temper."^d

These are hard words; and, if deserved, must condemn Henry of Monmouth. That they are not

^d Turner's History.

deserved; that he was not guilty of this offence against God and his father; that the page which records it condemns itself, and is contradictory to our undisputed public records; that the manuscript which contains the charge carries with it no authority whatever; and that the inference which has lately been fastened upon the original report is altogether inconsistent with the acknowledged facts of the case, are points which the Author believes he has established beyond further controversy in the Appendix; and to that dissertation he again with confidence refers the reader. But every reader whose verdict is worth receiving, will agree that our abhorrence of a crime should only increase our care and circumspection that no innocent person stand charged with it. If Henry were guilty, his character must remain branded with an indelible stain, in the estimation of every parent and every child, incomparably more disgraceful than those "vicious gaieties" with which poets and historiographers have delighted to stamp his memory. — At a time when disease was paralysing all a father's powers of body and mind, and hurrying him prematurely to the grave, that a first-born son, instead of devoting himself, and all his heart, and all his faculties, to his parent; strengthening his feeble hands, supporting his faltering steps, guiding his erring counsels, bearing his heavy burden, protecting him from the machinations of the malicious and designing, cheering his drooping spirits, making (as

far as in him lay) his last days on earth days of peace, and comfort, and calm preparation for the change to which he was hastening;—instead of this, that a son, who had always professed respect and affection for his father, should thrust the most painful thorn of all into the side of a sinking, broken down, dying man, is so abhorrent from every feeling, not only of a truly noble and generous spirit, but of mere ordinary humanity,—is so utterly “unprincipled,” “unfilial,” and “unnatural,”—that though in such a case we might hope, after a life of sincere Christian penitence, the stain might have been removed from his conscience; yet, in the estimation of the wise and good, he could never have obtained the name of “the most excellent and most gracious flower of Christian chivalry.”

Although for the real merits of the question, as far as relates to the manuscript, we refer to the argument in the Appendix; and although, if the foundation of original documents be withdrawn, it matters little to the investigator of the truth what superstructure modern writers have hastily run up; yet such a positive assertion as that “the King’s subsequent death prevented the final explosion of this unfilial conduct and unnatural rebellion” of the Prince, who cherished “feelings resembling the unprincipled ambition of a Catilanian temper,” does seem to call for a few words before we proceed with the narrative. It is difficult to say whether the confused views of the manu-

script, or of its modern commentator, be the greater. The manuscript, (to mention here only one specimen of its confusion,) in the very page which contains the accusing passage, represents the expedition to France in the summer of 1411; the battle of St. Cloud, which was fought November 10, of the same year; the expedition under the Duke of Clarence, which was undertaken after Midsummer 1412; and the return of the Duke and his forces to England, which was not till the spring of 1413, as having all taken place in the thirteenth year of Henry IV. And the commentator who tells us that the King's death prevented the final explosion of Henry's unfilial conduct, by confounding (as the manuscript had also done) the parliament in November 1411, with the parliament in February 1413, has entirely overlooked the facts which give a direct contradiction to his statement. The King's death did not occur till March 1413, more than a year and a quarter after the parliament ended in which the Prince is said to have been guilty of this act. The session of that parliament began on the 3rd of November, and broke up on the 20th of December; and the King, nearly half a year after its dissolution, declares his fixed* purpose, in order to avoid the spilling of human blood,

* This resolution of the King is embodied in his letter to the Burgomasters of Ghent, &c. dated May 16, 1412; in which he tells them that the Dukes of Berry, Orleans, and Bourbon had offered to surrender to him such lands of his as they held in the Duchy of Guienne, and to assist him in recovering the

to go in his own person to the Duchy of Guienne, and vindicate his rights with all possible speed.”^f Surely the web of his father’s life left Henry no lack of time and opportunity for the execution of any measures which the most reckless ambition could devise, or the most “Catilinarian” temper sanction. But, leaving this ill-advised statement without further observation, it remains for us to proceed with our narrative, entirely free from any apprehensions or misgivings that our researches and reflections may tend only to elucidate the character of one who, in the midst of splendid sins, would sacrifice his own father to unbounded, reckless ambition, and unprincipled self-aggrandizement.

Henry of Monmouth had now for a long time been virtually in possession of the royal authority. He was not only President of the Council, but his name is united with the King’s when both are present; and everything seems to have proceeded smoothly, with the best feelings of mutual confidence and kindness between himself, his father, and his brothers. Whether the King’s own inclination, uninfluenced by the representations of his parliament, would have led him to put the reins of

remainder. He prays the Burgomasters not to impede him in his designs.

^f On the 18th of April 1412, a warrant was issued to press sailors for the King’s intended voyage.

government into his son's hand, or whether he was induced by the complaints and urgent suggestions of the council (of which many broad and deep vestiges remain on record) to transfer the executive and legislative functions of the royal prerogative to a son in whom the people had entire confidence, may admit of much doubt. Probably both causes, his own increasing infirmities, and his people's dissatisfaction at the mismanagement of the court, expressed in no covert language, co-operated in producing that result. Hardyng (as he first wrote on this subject) would lead us to adopt the former view :

“ The King fell sick then, each day more and more ;
Wherefore the Prince *he* made (as it was seen)
Chief of Council, to ease him of his sore ;
Who to the Duke of Burgoyne sent, I ween ;”

whilst the petitions presented to him, and some subsequent events which must hereafter be noticed, make us suspect that the behaviour of the Commons might have hastened his resolution.

At the close of the year, (from recounting the transactions of which this serious charge against Henry's character induced us to digress,) the parliament met in the first week in November. It was to have been opened on the morrow of All Souls, (November 3, 1411,) but the peers and commoners were so tardy in their arrival, that the King postponed his meeting the parliament till the next day. In those times, the monarch seems to have

been in the habit of attending the parliamentary deliberations, and receiving the petitions, and taking part generally in the proceedings in person. Through this session Henry IV. was repeatedly present; and the Prince alone, of all his sons, appears to have attended also. Towards the close of this parliament, (the very parliament in which the alleged unfilial conduct of the Prince is represented to have occurred,) proceedings are recorded, which, though referred to in the Appendix for the sake of the argument, seem to require notice here also in the way of narration.

“Also, on Monday the last day of November, the said Speaker, in the name of the Commons, prayed the King to thank my lord the Prince, the Bishops of Winchester, of Durham, and others, who were assigned by the King to be of his council in the last parliament, for their great labour and diligence. For, as it appears to the said Commons, my lord the Prince, and the other lords, have well and loyally done their duty according to their promise in that parliament.^s And upon that, my lord the Prince, kneeling, with the other lords, declared by the mouth of my lord the Prince how they had taken pains and diligence and labours, according to their promise, and the charge given them in parliament,

^s Sir Robert Cotton, in his *Abridgement of the Rolls of Parliament*, seems to think (though without assigning any reason) that the “thanks were for well employing the treasure granted in the last parliament.”

to their skill and knowledge. This the King remembered well, and thanked them most graciously. And he said besides, that ‘he was well assured, if they had possessed larger means than they had, in the manner it had been spoken by the mouth of my lord the Prince at the time the King charged them to be of his council in the said parliament, they would have done their duty to effect more good than was done, in divers parts, for the defence, honour, good, and profit of him and his kingdom.’ And our lord the King also said, that he felt very contented with their good and loyal diligence, counsel, and duty, for the time they had been of his council.” This took place about a month after the Parliament had first met, and within less than three weeks of its termination. On the very last day of this same parliament, “the Speaker recommending the persons of the Queen, of the Prince, and of other the King’s sons, prayeth the advancement of their estates. For which the King giveth hearty thanks.” The question unavoidably forces itself upon the mind of every one,—Could such a transaction as that, by which the fair fame of the Prince is attempted to be destroyed for ever, have taken place in this parliament? It may be deemed superfluous to add, that, though the records of this parliament are very full and minute, not the most distant allusion occurs to any such conduct of the Prince.

But whilst, as we have seen, there had arisen

much discontent among the people with regard to the royal expenditure and the government of the King's household, the King in his turn had entertained feelings of dissatisfaction towards his parliament; in consequence, no doubt, of the plain and unreserved manner in which they had given utterance to their sentiments. When two parties are thus on the eve of a rupture, there never are wanting spirits of a temper (from the mere love of evil, or in the hope of benefiting themselves,) to foment the rising discord, and fan the smoking fuel into a flame. Such was the case in this instance, and such (as we shall soon see) was the case also in a course of proceedings far more closely united with the immediate subject of these Memoirs. On the same day, the last of the parliament, the Lords and Commons, addressing the King by petition, express their grief at the circulation of a report that he was offended on account of some matters done in this and the last parliament; and they pray him "to declare that he considers each and every of those in the estates of parliament to be loyal and faithful subjects," which petition the King of his especial grace in full parliament granted. This submission on the part of the parliament, and its gracious acceptance by the King, seem to have allayed, at least for a time, all hostile feeling between them.

The prayer of the parliament to the King, that he would express his own and the nation's thanks to the Prince and the other members of his council,

has been thought to imply some suspicion on their part that the royal favour was withdrawn from the Prince, that the King was jealous of his influence, and was therefore backward in publicly acknowledging his obligations to his son. Be this as it may, two points seem to press themselves on our notice here:—first, that up to the May of the following year, 1412, no appearance is discoverable of any coolness or alienation of regard and confidence between the Prince and the King;—the second point is, that it is scarcely possible to read the disjointed records of the intervening months between the spring of that year and the next winter, without a strong suspicion suggesting itself, that the cordial harmony with which the royal father and his son had lived was unhappily interrupted for a time, and that misunderstandings and jealousies had been fostered to separate them. The subject is one of lively interest, and, though involved in much mystery, must not be disposed of without investigation; and, whilst we claim at the hands of others to “set down nought in malice,” we must “nothing extenuate,” nor allow any apprehension of consequences to suppress or soften the very truth. The Author feels himself bound to state not only the mere details of facts from which inferences might be drawn, but to offer unreservedly his own opinion, formed upon a patient research, and an honest weighing of whatever evidence he may have found. The results of his in-

quiries, after looking at the point in all the bearings in which his own reflections or the suggestions of others have placed it, is this :

Henry of Monmouth was assigned on the 12th of May 1407, with the consent of the council, to remain about the person of the King, that he might devote himself more constantly to the public service ; probably the declining health of the King even then made such a measure desirable. From the hour when the Prince became president of the council, his influence through every rank of society naturally grew very rapidly, and extended to every branch of the executive government. Petitions were presented to him by name, not only by inferior applicants, but even by his brothers. Letters of recommendation were addressed to him by foreigners ; and, in more than one instance, his interest was sought even by the Pope himself. When the King was personally present in the council, the record states, that the business was conducted “ in the presence of the King, and of his son the Prince.” The father retained the name, the son exercised the powers of sovereign. Such pre-eminence, as long as human nature remains the same, will give offence to some, and will engender envyings and jealousies and oppositions : nor was the Prince suffered long to enjoy his high station unmolested. Who were the persons more especially engaged in the unkind office of severing the father from his son, is matter of conjecture ; so is also the immediate cause and

occasion of their disunion. One of the oldest chroniclers^h would induce us to believe that a temporary estrangement was effected in consequence of some malicious detractors having misrepresented the Prince's conduct with reference to the Dukes of Burgundy and Orleans. Some may suspect that the appointment of his brother Thomas to take the command of the troops in the expedition to Guienne, when their father's increasing malady prevented him from putting into execution his design of conducting that campaign in person, might have given umbrage to the Prince, and led to an open rupture. And undoubtedly it would have been only natural, had the Prince felt that, in return for all his labours and his devoted exertions in the field and at the council-board, the honourable post of commanding the armament to Guienne should have been assigned to him as the representative of his diseased parent.ⁱ But, perhaps, this

^h Elmham.

ⁱ It may, moreover, be very fairly conjectured that the presence of the Prince at home was regarded by the people as far too important at this time to admit of his leaving the kingdom on such an expedition. It will be remembered that one of the first requests made by the parliament on the accession of his father was, that the Prince's life, and the welfare of the nation, might not be hazarded by his departure out of the kingdom; and subsequently, on his own accession, one of the first recommendations of his council was that he would remain in or near London. It is very probable that a similar wish might have interposed, had he, and not his brother, been commissioned to conduct the expedition to Guienne. Calais was so identified

was not in his thoughts at all. Certainly no trace in our histories or public documents is discoverable of any coolness or distance^k prevailing afterwards between himself and his brother Thomas, as though he regarded him as a rival and supplanter. Hardyng (the two editions of whose poem, brought out at distant times, and under different auspices, in many cases give a very different colouring to the same transaction,) represents the time of the Prince's dismissal from the council, and the temporary quarrel between him and his father, to have followed soon after the return of the English soldiers sent to aid the Duke of Burgundy. His second edition, however, paints in more unfavourable colours the opposition of the Prince to his father, and sinks that voluntary return to filial obedience and regard which his first edition had described in expressions implying praise. In the Lansdowne manuscript, or first edition, an original marginal note directs the reader to observe "How the King and the Prince fell at great discord, and soon accorded."

with the kingdom of England that his residence there is no exception to the rule.

^k In the Sloane manuscript, indeed, we are told that on a pecuniary dispute arising between Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, and Thomas Duke of Clarence, with reference to the will of the late Duke of Exeter, brother of the Bishop, who was his executor, and whose widow the Duke of Clarence had married, the Prince took part with the Bishop, and so the Duke of Clarence failed of obtaining his full demand.

“ Then came they home with great thanks and reward,
So, of the Duke of Burgoyne without fail.
Soon after then (befel it afterward)
The Prince was then discharged of counsaile.
His brother Thomas then, for the King's availe,
Was in his stead then set by ordinance,
For which the *Prince* and *he* fell at distance.
With whom the King took part, in great sickness,
Again[st] the Prince with all his excellence.
But with a rety of lords and soberness
The Prince came into his magnificence
Obey, and hole with all benevolence
Unto the King, and fully were accord
Of all matters of which they were discord.”

In his later publication, the same writer gives a very different colouring to the whole proceeding on the part of the Prince; robbing him of his hearty good-will towards reconciliation, and representing his return to a right understanding with his father as the result rather of defeat and compulsion; but this was at a time when the star of the house of Lancaster had set, and when the house of York was in the ascendant.

“ The King discharged the Prince from his counsail,
And set my lord Sir Thomas in his stead
Chief of council, for the King's more avail.
For which the Prince, of wrath and wilful head,
Again[st] him made debate and froward head ;
With whom the King took part, and held the field
To time the Prince unto the King him yield.”

Either of these representations of Hardyng will fully account for Shakspeare's

“Thy place in council thou hast rudely lost,
Which by thy younger brother is supplied.”¹

though the poet, by fixing the interview between Henry and his father before the battle of Shrewsbury, has made the expulsion of the Prince from the council precede his original admission into it by four years, and his withdrawal from it by at least eight or nine years. It must here be remarked, that no historical document records the presence of Thomas Duke of Clarence as a member of the council-board: though, at the same time, the records in which we might have expected to find his presence registered, by observing a similar silence with regard to the Prince, seem to leave little doubt that Henry had ceased to attend the board a year before his father's death. Some strong though obscure passages, moreover, in the Chronicles of the time, would go far to suggest the probability of a demonstration of his power

¹ A passage which the Author has lately discovered in the Pell Roll, 18th February 1412, will not admit of any other interpretation than that the Prince, at the date of payment, had ceased to be of the King's especial council. Members of that board (as appears by various entries) were paid for their attendance. In the Easter Roll, for example, of the previous year, payment on that ground “to the King's brother, the Bishop of Winchester,” is recorded. The payment to the Prince is thus registered: “To Henry Prince of Wales 1000 marks,—666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*—ordered by the King to be paid in consideration of the labours, costs, and charges sustained by him at the time when he *was* of the council of our lord himself the King,”—“tempore quo fuit de consilio ipsius Domini Regis.”

and influence through the country having actually taken place on the part of the Prince. Thus the Chronicle of London records, that "on the last day of June the Prince came to London with much people and gentles, and remained in the Bishop of Durham's house till July 11th. And the King, who was then at St. John's house, removed to the Bishop of London's palace, and thence to his house at Rotherhithe."^m But the Chronicle suggests no reason for these movements and ambiguous proceedings. Thus, too, on the 23rd of September, the mere fact is stated that "Prince Henry came to the council with a huge people," supplying no clue as to the meaning and intention of the concourse. It cannot, moreover, escape observation, that, though the King held a council at Rotherhithe on the 8th and on the 10th of July, the

^m Perhaps more importance than the reality would warrant has been attached to the circumstance that the King on this occasion went to Rotherhithe, as though he withdrew from his son for safety to so unwonted and retired a place. It was not unusual for Henry IV. to hold his council at Rotherhithe. A year before this muster of the Prince's friends, the instructions given to the Earl of Arundel and others on their embassy to treat with the Duke of Burgundy for a marriage between his daughter and the Prince were signed by the King at Rotherhithe. In these instructions the Prince is mentioned throughout as though he and his father were inseparably united in the issue of the proceeding. "Till the report be made to the King *and* his very dear son the Prince." "Our lord the King is well disposed, *and* his very dear son my lord the Prince, to send aid." And Hugh Mortimer, one of the ambassadors, was chamberlain to the Prince.

Prince was not present : on the 9th, also, when his brother Thomas was created Duke of Clarence and Earl of Albemarle, though the Bishop of Durham, at whose house the Prince was staying, witnessed the creation, the Prince was not himself one of the witnesses. This circumstance, indeed, may be so interpreted as to remove all idea of open hostility prevailing at that time between the King and the Prince. The prelate, it may fairly be supposed, would scarcely have been a welcome attendant at Rotherhithe, if he were showing all kind and free hospitality to a rebellious son, who was acting at that very time in menacing defiance of his father, and evincing by the demonstration of his numerous and powerful friends the fixed purpose of avenging himself for whatever insults he might believe himself to have received from the court party.

Equally in the dark do our records leave us as to the persons who were the fomentors of this breach between father and son. The oldest historians intimate that there were mischief-makers, whose malicious designs were for a time successful. Subsequent events (referred to hereafter in these volumes) compel us to entertain a strong suspicion that the Queen (Johanna) was at the head of a party resolved, if possible, to check the growing and absorbing interest of her son-in-law in the national council, to diminish his power, and tarnish

his honour.ⁿ Be this as it may, there are, to be placed in the opposite scale, facts at which we have already slightly glanced, seeming to imply that things were going on smoothly between Henry and his father, even through that brief interval of time about which alone any doubts can be reasonably entertained. A Minute of the Council, apparently between the July and September of this year (1412), records that "it is the King's pleasure for my lord the Prince^o to have payment on an assignment for the wages of his men still in his pay in Wales:" and on the 21st of October, in a

ⁿ Who were the inferior agents in this ungracious and mischievous proceeding we have not discovered. Perhaps, however, the Author would not be justified in suppressing a suspicion which has forced itself on his mind, that, among those who entertained no kind feeling towards the Prince, was Richard Kyngeston, then late Archdeacon of Hereford, for a long time employed in the King's household, and through whose administration the expenses seem to have swollen very much; to control which was one of the principal causes for the appointment of the Prince, the Bishop of Winchester, and others, to be members of the especial council of the King. This suspicion was first suggested by the absence of all allusion to the Prince in the Archdeacon's letters to the King from Hereford in the early years of the Welsh rebellion, though Henry was close at hand; and the very ambiguous expression, "Trust ye nought to no lieutenant," when the Prince himself was virtually, if not already by indenture, Lieutenant of Wales.

^o We have already seen that in the month of May the Prince in his own person (with his brothers) ratifies the league entered into between the King and the Dukes of Orleans, Berry, and Bourbon. Jean le Fevre dates it May 8th, 1412.

council at Merton, "the King wills that the treasurer of Calais shall not interfere with any receipt or payments henceforward till otherwise advised; and that the treasurer of England shall receive all the monies arising from the third part of the subsidy on wools, to be paid by him from time to time at his discretion to the treasurer of Calais, with such intent that my lord the Prince, Captain of the town of Calais, might the more readily receive payment of what is in arrear to him and his soldiers living with him, according to the agreement; and also for the increase of his soldiers by the ordinance of the King beyond the number comprised in that agreement."

On the whole of this extraordinary and mysterious passage of Henry of Monmouth's life, the Author must confess that it will be no surprise to him to find (with a mass of other matter more voluminous and important than we may now anticipate) new evidence affecting Henry's character, probably to his utter exculpation, possibly to his disadvantage, yet forthcoming from the countless treasures of unpublished records. Meanwhile, he can now, after a patient examination of all the books and manuscripts, original documents and subsequent histories, with which it has been his lot to meet, only return a verdict upon the evidence before him. And the inferences in which alone he has been able satisfactorily to acquiesce, are these:—First, that, after the Prince had for some time been

a most active and indefatigable President of the Council, he ceased to retain that office in consequence of a misunderstanding between himself and his father, fostered by some persons whose interest or malicious pleasure instigated them to so unworthy an expedient: Secondly, that after a demonstration of his strength in the affections and devotedness of the people, for the purpose (not of acting with violence or intimidation towards the King,^p but) of convincing his enemies that the ma-

^p Among the conjectures which may suggest themselves as to the possible origin of the manuscripts' charge, that the Prince sought to obtain from his father a resignation of his crown, it might not be unreasonably surmised, nor would the supposition reflect unfavourably at all on Henry's character, that, finding his father to be in the hands of unworthy persons, preying upon his fortune, misdirecting his counsels, rendering the monarch personally unpopular, and bringing the monarchy itself into disrepute, (of all which evils there is strong evidence,) the Prince might have urged on his father the necessity of again intrusting the management of the public weal (which disease had incapacitated him from conducting himself) to the hands of the same counsellors who had before served him and the realm to the acknowledged profit and honour of both. The Prince might, influenced only by the most honest, and upright, and affectionate motives, have professed his willingness to undertake the duties again from which he had (with his colleagues) been as it should seem causelessly discharged. And such a proceeding on his part might easily have been so misrepresented as to constitute the charge contained in the manuscript. The representations of Elmham, to which we have already briefly referred, and which are confirmed by other early writers, are so express with reference to these points, that they seem to require something more than a mere reference in this place. "When his father was suffering under the torture

chinations of jealousy and detraction would have no power permanently to blast his reputation, and crush his influence, the alienation was soon happily terminated by the frank and filial conduct of the Prince, who as anxiously sought a full reconciliation as his father willingly conceded it: Thirdly, that, through the last months of his life, the King was free from all uneasiness and disquietude on that ground; and that the illness which terminated his earthly career, instead of being aggravated by the Prince's undutiful demeanour, was lightened by his affectionate attendance; and the dying monarch was comforted by the tender offices of his son.

On the whole (allowing for inaccuracies as well of addition as of omission, which, though incapable of any specific correction, must perhaps exist

of a grievous sickness, the Prince endeavoured with filial devotedness to meet his wishes in every possible way; and notwithstanding the biting detraction and manifold accusations of some, which (according to the prevalence of common opinion) made efforts to diminish the kind feeling of the father towards his son, the Prince himself, by means of his own most affectionate kindness, succeeded finally in securing with his father favour, grace, and blessing, though those envious persons still resisted it."—Cum idem pater gravissimis ægritudinis incommodis torqueretur, eidem juxta omnem possibilitatem, totis conatibus, filiali obsequio obedivit, et non obstante quorundam detractatione mordaci et accusatione multiplici, quæ (prout vulgaris opinio cecinit) paterni favoris in filium moliebantur decrementa, ipse invidis renitentibus, suæ piissimæ benignitatis mediis, apud patrem, favorem, gratiam et benedictionem finaliter consequi merebatur.

in so detailed a narrative,) we shall not be far from the truth if we accept in its general outline the relation of this event as we find it in Stowe.

“Henry, the Prince, offended with certain of his father’s family, who were said to sow discord between the father and the son, wrote unto all the parts of the realm, endeavouring himself to refute all the practices and imaginations of such detractors and slanderous people; and, to make the matter more manifest to the world, he came to the King, his father, about the Feast of Peter and Paul, with such a number of his friends and wellwishers, as a greater had not been seen in those days. He was straightway admitted to his father’s presence, of whom this one thing he besought of him, that if such as had accused him might be convicted of unjust accusation, they might be punished, not according to their deserts, but yet, after their lies were proved, they might somewhat taste of that which they had meant, although not to the uttermost. The which request the King seemed to grant; but he told him that he must tarry a parliament, that such might be tried and punished by judgment of their peers.”^q Stowe refers to the work ascribed to Otterbourne, the sentiments of which he faithfully represents, and then proceeds with the further narrative. “The King had entertained suspicions in consequence of the Prince’s excesses, and the

^q Stowe’s Annals.

great recourse of people unto him, of which his court was at all times more abundant than his father's, that he would presume to usurp the crown; so that, in consequence of this suspicious jealousy, he withdrew in part his affection and singular love from the Prince.^r He was accompanied by a large body of lords and gentlemen; but those he would not suffer to advance beyond the fire in the hall, in order to remove all suspicion from his father of any intention to overawe or intimidate him. As soon as the Prince had declared to his father that his life was not so desirable to him that he would wish to live one day to his father's displeasure, and that he coveted not so much his own life as his father's pleasure and welfare, the King embraced the Prince, and with tears addressed him: 'My right dear and heartily beloved son, it is of truth that I had you partly suspect, and, as I now perceive, undeserved on your part. I will have you no longer in distrust for any reports that shall be made unto me. And thereof I assure you upon my honour.' Thus, by his great wisdom, was the wrongful imagination of his father's hate utterly avoided, and himself restored to the King's former grace and favour."

^r How far we ought to believe the strange story about the Prince visiting his father in a mountebank's disguise, and praying the King to stab him with a dagger which he presented to him, is very problematical. There is much about it, and its circumstances, which gives it the air of great incredibility. Stowe here assumes, without good ground, that the suspicions of the King were excited by Henry's excesses.

Stowe then reports that after Christmas the King called a parliament (on the morrow of the Purification, February 3,) to the end of which he did not survive. During his illness, which became much worse from about Christmas, he gave most excellent advice to Henry; the particulars of which, as recorded by Stowe, are probably more the fruits of the writer's imagination than the faithful transcript of any recorded sentiments. Still the possibility of their having existed in documents since lost, may perhaps be deemed a sufficient reason for assigning to them a place in this work.

“ ‘ My dear and well-beloved son, I beseech thee, and upon my blessing charge thee, that, like as thou hast said, so thou minister justice equally, and in no wise suffer them that be oppressed long to call upon thee for justice; but redress oppressions, and indifferently and without delay: for no persuasion of flatterers, nor of them that be partial, or such as have their hands replenished with gifts, defer not justice till to-morrow if that thou mayest do justice this day, lest peradventure God do justice on thee in the mean time, and take from thee thine authority. Remember that the wealth of thy body and thy soul and of thy realm resteth in the execution of justice: and do not thy justice so that thou be called a tyrant; but use thyself in the middle way between justice and mercy in those things that belong to thee. And between parties do justice truly, to the consolation of thy poor

subjects that suffer injuries, and to the punishment of them that be extortioners and doers of oppression, that others thereby may take example; and in thus doing thou shalt obtain the favour of God, and the love and fear of thy subjects; and therefore also thou shalt have thy realm more in tranquillity and rest, which shall be occasion of great prosperity within thy realm, which Englishmen naturally do desire; for, so long as they have wealth and riches, so long shalt thou have obeisance; and, when they be poor, then they be always ready at every motion to make insurrections, and it causeth them to rebel against their sovereign lord; for the nature of them is such rather to fear losing of their goods and worldly substance, than the jeopardy of their lives. And if thou thus keep them in subjection, mixed with love and fear, thou shalt have the most peaceable and fertile country, and the most loving, faithful, and manly people of the world; which shall be cause of no small fear to thine adversaries. My son, when it shall please God to call me to the way decreed for every worldly creature, to thee, as my son and heir, I must leave my crown and my realm; which I advise thee not to take vainly, and as a man elate in pride, and rejoiced in worldly honour; but think that thou art more oppressed with charge to purvey for every person within the realm, than exalted by vain honour of the world. Thou shalt be exalted unto the crown for the wealth and conservation of the realm, and not for thy singular

commodity and avail. My son, thou shalt be a minister unto thy realm, to keep it in tranquillity and to defend it. Like as the heart in the midst of the body is principal and chief thing, and serveth to covet and desire that thing that is most necessary to every of thy members; so, my son, thou shalt be amongst thy people as chief and principal of them, to minister, imagine, and acquire those things that may be most beneficial unto them. And then thy people shall be obedient unto thee, to aid and succour thee, and in all things to accomplish thy commandments, like as thy ministers labour every one in his office to acquire and get that thing that thy heart desireth: and as thy heart is of no force, and impotent, without the aid of thy members, so without thy people thy reign is nothing. My son, thou shalt fear and dread God above all things; and thou shalt love, honour, and worship him with all thy heart: thou shalt attribute and ascribe to him all things wherein thou seest thyself to be well fortunate, be it victory of thine enemies, love of thy friends, obedience of thy subjects, strength and activeness of body, honour, riches, or fruitful generations, or any other thing, whatever it be, that chanceth to thy pleasure. Thou shalt not imagine that any such thing should fortune to thee by thine act, nor by thy desert; but thou shalt think that all cometh only of the goodness of the Lord. Thus shalt thou with all thine heart praise, honour, and thank God for all his

benefits that he giveth unto thee. And in thyself eschew all vainglory and elation of heart, following the wholesome counsel of the Psalmist, which saith, 'Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us! but unto thy name give the praise!' These, and many other admonitions and doctrines, this victorious King gave unto this noble Prince his son, who with effect followed the same after the death of his father, whereby he obtained grace of our Lord to attain to great victories, and many glorious and incredible conquests, through the help and succour of our Lord, whereof he was never destitute."

For the exquisitely beautiful picture of Shakspeare, called by some 'The Chamber Scene,' by others 'The Crown Scene,' the materials probably were gathered from Monstrelet, whose narrative is the only evidence we now have of the incident. That narrative, indeed, is not contradicted by any other account; still its authenticity is very questionable. It is, perhaps, impossible not to entertain a suspicion that a French writer would, without much enquiry, admit an anecdote by which Henry IV. is made to disclaim all title to the English throne, and, by immediate consequence, all title to the English possessions in the fair realm of France. It is also improbable either that Henry IV. would have uttered this sentiment in the presence of a witness, or that his son would have made it known to others. Monstrelet's anecdote, nevertheless, be-

ing the source of so inimitable a scene as Shakespeare has drawn from it, deserves a place here : "The King's attendant, not perceiving him to breathe, concluded he was dead, and covered his face with a cloth. The crown was then upon a cushion near the bed. The Prince, believing his father to be dead, took away the crown. Shortly after, the King uttered a groan, and revived ; and, missing his crown, sent for his son, and asked why he had removed it. The Prince mentioned his supposition that his father had died. The King gave a deep sigh, and said, ' My fair son, what right have you to it ? you knew I had none.'—' My lord,' replied Henry, ' as you have held it by right of your sword, it is my intent to hold and defend it the same during my life.' The King answered, ' Well, all as you see best ; I leave all things to God, and pray that he will have mercy on me.' Shortly after, without uttering another word, he expired." ^s

Henry IV. expired on Monday, March 20, 1413 ; and his remains were taken to Canterbury, and there interred near the grave of his first wife. Clement Maidstone^t testifies to his having heard a man swear to his father, that he threw the body into the Thames between Barking and Gravesend ; but, on a late investigation, under the superintendence of members of the cathedral, the body was found still to be in the coffin, proving the falsehood

^s Monstrelet, viii.

^t Anglia Sacra, vol. ii. p. 371.

of this foolish story.^u The funeral was celebrated with great solemnity ; and Henry V. attended in person to assist in paying this last homage of respect to the earthly remains of his sovereign and father.

^u Archæologia.

CHAPTER XIV.

HENRY OF MONMOUTH'S CHARACTER.—UNFAIRNESS OF MODERN WRITERS.—WALSINGHAM EXAMINED.—TESTIMONY OF HIS FATHER—OF HOTSPUR—OF THE PARLIAMENT—OF THE ENGLISH AND WELSH COUNTIES—OF CONTEMPORARY CHRONICLERS.—NO ONE SINGLE ACT OF IMMORALITY ALLEGED AGAINST HIM.—NO INTIMATION OF HIS EXTRAVAGANCE, OR INJUSTICE, OR RIOT, OR LICENTIOUSNESS, IN WALES, LONDON, OR CALAIS.—DIRECT TESTIMONY TO THE OPPOSITE VIRTUES.—LYDGATE.—OCCLEVE.

THE hour of his father's death having been fixed upon as the date of Henry's reputed conversion from a career of thoughtless dissipation and reckless profligacy to a life of religion and virtue, this may appear to be the most suitable place for a calm review of his previous character and conduct.

In the very threshold of our inquiry, perhaps the most remarkable circumstance to be observed is this, that whilst the charges now so unsparingly and unfeelingly brought against his character, rest solely on the vague, general, and indefinite assertions of writers, (many of whom appear to aim at exalting his repentance into somewhat approaching a miraculous conversion,) no one single act of vio-

lence,^a intemperance, injustice, immorality, or even levity of any kind, religious or moral, is placed upon record. Either sweeping and railing accusations are alleged, unsubstantiated by proof or argument; or else his subsequent repentance is cited to bear testimony to his former misdoings. Thus one writer asserts;^b “This monarch, in the former part of his life, was remarkable for dissipation and extravagance of conduct; in the latter, he became the slave of the popedom. Voluptuousness, ambition, superstition, each in their turn had the ascendant in this extraordinary character.” Thus does another sum up the whole question in one short note:^c “The assertions of his reformation are so express, that the fact cannot be justly questioned without doubting all history; and, if there were reformation, there must have been previous errors.”^d

^a The story of the Chief Justice, &c. will be examined separately and at length. The charge from Calais of peculation (we have already seen) brought with it its own refutation: whilst the evidence on which alone the charge against him of undutiful conduct towards his father rests is proved to be altogether devoid of credit.

^b Milner, *Church History*, Cent. XV.

^c Turner, *History of England*, book ii. ch. x.

^d Rapin, who follows Hall, and gives no better authority, tells us that Prince Henry's court was the receptacle of libertines, debauchees, buffoons, parasites, and the like. The question naturally suggests itself, “Ought not such a writer as Rapin to have sought for some evidence to support this assertion?” Had he sought diligently, and reported honestly, such a sentence as this could never have fallen from his pen.

The expressions of Walsingham, (being the same in his History, and in the work called "*Ypodigma Neustriæ*," or "*A Sketch of Normandy*," which he dedicated to Henry V. himself,) are considered by some persons to have laid an insurmountable barrier in the way of those who would remove from Henry's "brow," as Prince, "the stain" of "wildness, riot, and dishonour." And, doubtless, no one who would discharge the office of an upright judge or an honest witness, would either suppress or gloss over the passage which is supposed to present these formidable difficulties, or withdraw from the balance a particle of the full weight which might appear after examination to belong to that passage as its own. In our inquiry, however, we must be upon our guard against the fallacy in which too many writers, when handling this question, have indulged by arguing in a circle. We must not first say, Walsingham bears testimony to Henry's early depravity, therefore we must believe him to have been guilty; and then conclude, because tradition fixes delinquency on Henry's early days, therefore Walsingham's passage can admit only of that interpretation which fixes the guilt upon him. Let Walsingham's text be fairly sifted upon its own merits; and then, whatever shall appear to have

Carte gives a very different view of Henry of Monmouth's court; and a view, as many believe, far nearer the truth. "It was crowded," he says, "by the nobles and great men of the land, when his father's court was comparatively deserted."

been his meaning of an adverse nature, let that be added to the evidence against Henry; and let the whole be put into the scale, and weighed against whatever may be alleged in refutation of the charges with which his memory has been assailed. It would be the result then of a morbid deference to the opinions of others, rather than the judgment of his own reasoning, were the Author to withhold his persuasion that more importance has been assigned to Walsingham's words than a full and unbiassed scrutiny into their real bearing would sanction. To the judgment of each individually must this branch of evidence, no less than the entire question of Henry's moral character, be left. A transcript of Walsingham's words, as they appear in the printed editions of his History and in the "*Ypodigma Neustriæ*,"^e will be found at

^e The Author has searched in vain for any contemporary manuscript of Walsingham's "*Ypodigma Neustriæ*." There is a copy in the British Museum, written up to a certain point on vellum; the latter part, containing these sentences, is on paper, and of comparatively a very recent date, transcribed, as the Author thinks, not from a previous MS. of the *Ypodigma*, but from a copy of the History. His ground for this inference is the circumstance that the interpolation in the History, as to Edmund Mortimer's death, which is not found in the printed editions of the *Ypodigma*, occurs in this MS. The MS. on vellum, preserved in the Heralds' College, is a copy of the History, transcribed, as the Author conceives, by a very ignorant copyist. The same interpolation of "*Obiit*" occurs here also; and, instead of calling the person spoken of Edmund Mortimer, it has "*Edmundus mortifer*." The Author was very desirous of comparing the original copy of Walsingham's

the foot of the page.^f The following is probably as close a rendering of the original, as the strangely metaphorical, and in some cases the obscure expressions of Walsingham will bear. "On which day [of Henry's coronation] there was a very severe storm of snow, all persons marvelling at the roughness of the weather. Some considered the disturbance of the atmosphere as portending the new King's destiny to be cold in action, severe in discipline and in the exercise of the royal functions; others, forming a milder estimate of the person of the King, interpreted this inclemency of the sky as the best omen, namely, that the King himself would cause the colds and snows of vices to fall in

Ypodigma, as dedicated to Henry V, with subsequent transcripts or versions. He entertains a strong suspicion that the sentences here commented upon were not in the original; but, in the absence of the means of ascertaining the matter of fact, he reasons upon them as though they were actually submitted to the eye of Henry himself.

^f "Quo die fuit tempestas nivis maxima, cunctis admirantibus de temporis asperitate; quibusdam novelli Regis fati impingentibus aeris turbulentiam, velut ipse futurus esset in agendis frigidus, in regimine regnoque severus. Aliis mitiùs de personâ Regis sapientibus, et hanc aeris intemperiem interpretantibus omen optimum, quòd ipse videlicet nives et frigora vitiorum faceret in regno cadere, et serenos virtutum fructus emergere; ut posset effectualiter à suis dici subditis, 'Jam enim hyems transiit, imber abiit et recessit.' Qui reverà, mox ut initiatus est regni infulis, repente mutatus est in virum alterum, honestati, modestiæ, ac gravitati studens, nullum virtutum genus omittens quod non cuperet exercere. Cujus mores et gestus omni conditioni, tam religiosorum quàm laicorum, in exempla fuere."

his reign, and the mild fruits of virtues to spring up ; so that, with practical truth, it might be said by his subjects, ‘The winter is past, the rain is over and gone.’ For verily, as soon as he was initiated with the chaplet of royalty, he suddenly was changed into another man, studying rectitude, modesty, and gravity, [or propriety, moderation, and steadiness,] desiring to exercise every class of virtue without omitting any ; whose manners and conduct were an example to persons of every condition in life, as well of the clergy as of the laity.”

Unquestionably, from these expressions an inference may be drawn fairly, and without harshness or exaggeration, that the “changed man” had been in times past negligent of some important branches of moral duty ; vehement, hasty, and impetuous in his general proceedings ; and not considering in his pursuits their fitness for his station and place ; in a word, guilty of moral delinquencies immediately opposed to the virtues enumerated. On the other hand, by specifying those three moral qualities, (in which this passage is interpreted to imply that Henry’s life had undergone a sudden and total change, — rectitude, modesty, and steadiness,) Walsingham appears to have selected exactly those identical points, for Henry’s full possession of which the parliament of England had felicitated his father ; and which, either separately, or in combination with other excellencies, continued to be ascribed to him at various times,

as occasion offered, even to a period within a few months of his accession to the throne. Never did a young man receive from his contemporaries more unequivocal testimony to the practical exercise in his person of propriety, modesty, and perseverance, than Henry of Monmouth received before he became King.

It may be said, and with perfect fairness, that the testimony of parliament to his virtues so early as the year 1406 leaves a most important chasm in a young man's life, during which he might have fallen from his integrity, and have rapidly formed habits of the opposite vices. But through that period no expressions occur in history which even by implication involve any degeneracy, any change from good to bad. On the contrary, to his zeal and steadiness, and perseverance and integrity, such incidental testimony is borne from time to time as would of itself leave a very different impression on the mind from that which Walsingham's words in their usual acceptation would convey; whilst no allusion whatever is discernible to any habits or practices contrary to the principles of religious and moral self-government. Indeed, it has been, not without reason, doubted whether, in the absence of more positive testimony, such sudden changes, first from good to bad, and then from bad to good, be not in themselves improbable.

On the whole, whilst each must be freely left to pronounce his own verdict, it is here humbly but

sincerely suggested that Walsingham's words fairly admit of an interpretation more in accordance with the view of Henry's moral worth generally adopted in these Memoirs⁴; namely, that his character rose suddenly with the occasion; that new energies were called into action by his new duties; that his moral and intellectual powers kept on a level with his elevation to so high a dignity, and with such an increase of power and influence; and that he continued to excite the admiration of the world by improving rapidly in every excellence, as his awful sense of the momentous responsibility he then for the first time felt imposed upon him grew in strength and intenseness. He became "another, a new man," by giving himself up with all his soul to his new duties as sovereign; and by cultivating with practical devotedness those virtues which might render him (and which, as Walsingham says, did actually render him) a bright and shining example to every class of his subjects.⁵

Undoubtedly most of the subsequent chroniclers not only speak of his reformation, but broadly state that he had given himself very great licence in self-gratification, and therefore needed to be reformed. Before Shakspeare's day, the reports adopted by our historiographers had fully justified him in his representation of Henry's early courses; and, since his time, few writers have considered it their duty

⁴ Hardyng uses this expression:

"A new man made in all good regimence."

to verify the exquisite traits of his pencil, or examine the evidence on which he rested.

“ His addiction was to courses vain ;
His companies unlettered, rude, and shallow ;
His hours filled up with riots, banquets, sports ;
And never noted in him any study,
Any retirement, any sequestration
From open haunts and popularity.”

Let the investigator who is resolved not to yield an implicit and blind assent to vague assertion, however positive, and how often soever repeated, well and truly try for himself the issue by evidence, and trace Henry from his boyhood ; let him search with unsparing diligence and jealous scrutiny through every authentic document relating to him ; let his steps be followed into the marches, the towns, the valleys, and the mountains of Wales ; let him be watched narrowly month after month during his residence in London, or wherever he happened to be staying with the court, or in Calais during his captaincy there ; and not a single hint occurs of any one irregularity.^h The research will bring to light no single expression savour-

^h The Author having heard of a reported arrest of the Prince at Coventry for a riot, with his two brothers, in 1412, took great pains to investigate the authenticity of the record. It is found in a manuscript of a date not earlier than James I ; whilst the more ancient writings of the place are entirely silent on the subject. The best local antiquaries, after having carefully examined the question, have reported the whole story to the Author as apocryphal.

ing of impiety, dissoluteness, carelessness, or even levity.

Testimony, on the other hand, ample and repeated, as we have already seen in these pages, is borne to his valour, and unremitting exertions and industry; to his firmness of purpose, his integrity, his filial duty and affection; his high-mindedness (in the best sense of the word), his generous spirit, his humanity, his habits of mind, so unsuspecting as to expose him often to the over-reaching designs of the crafty and the unprincipled, his pious trust in Providence, and habitual piety and devotion. To these, and other excellences in his moral compound, his father,ⁱ and his father's anta-

ⁱ It is not within the province of these Memoirs to record the Will of Henry IV, or to comment upon its provisions. There is, however, one sentence in it, a reference to which cannot be out of place here. In the year 1408, 21st January, a Will, which to the day of his death he never revoked, contains this sentence written in English: "And for to execute this testament well and truly, for the great trust that I have of my son the Prince, I ordain and make him my executor of my testament aforesaid, calling to him such as him thinketh in his discretion that can and will labour to the soonest speed of my will comprehended in this my testament. And to fulfil all things aforesaid truly, I charge my aforesaid son on my blessing." It may deserve consideration whether this clause in a father's last Will, never revoked, be consistent with the idea of his having expelled the son of whom he thus speaks from his council, and banished him his presence; and whether it may not fairly be put in the opposite scale against the vague and unsubstantial assertions of the Prince's recklessness, and his father's alienation from him. It must at the same time be

gonist, Hotspur, the assembled parliament of England, the common people of Wales, the gentlemen of distant counties, contemporary chroniclers, (combined with the public records of the kingdom and the internal evidence of his own letters,) bear direct and unstinted witness. From the first despatch of Hotspur to the last vote of thanks in parliament, there is a chain of testimonies (detailed in their chronological order in previous chapters of this work) very seldom equalled in the case of so young a man, and, through so long a period, perhaps never surpassed. And yet, though he was through the whole of that time the constant object of observation, and the subject of men's thoughts and words, no complaint of any neglect of duty arrests our notice, nor is there even an insinuation thrown out of any excess, indiscretion, or extravagance whatever. Not a word from the tongue of friend or foe, of accuser or apologist, would induce us to suspect that anything wrong was stifled or kept back. There are complaints of the extravagant expenditure of his father, and recommendations of retrenchment and economy in the King's household; but never on any occasion, (even when the Prince is most urgent and importunate for supplies of money, offering the most favourable and inviting opportunity for remonstrance or remark),

borne in mind that the Will was made before the time usually selected as the period of their estrangement. The Will, nevertheless, was not revoked nor altered in this particular.

is there the slightest innuendo either from the King, the Lords of the council, or the Commons in parliament, that he expended the least sum unnecessarily.^k No improper channel of expense, public or private, domestic or personal, is glanced at; nothing is objected to in his establishment; no item is recommended to be abolished or curtailed; no change of conduct is hinted at as desirable. And yet subsequent writers speak with one accord of his reformation; "and reformation implies previous errors." After examining whatever documents concerning him the most diligent research could discover, the Author is compelled to report as his unbiassed and deliberate judgment, that the character with which Henry of Monmouth's name has been stamped for profligacy and dissipation, is founded, not on the evidence of facts, but on the vagueness of tradition. Still such is the tradition, and it must stand for its due value. And if we allow tradition to tell us of his faults, we must in common fairness receive from the same tradition the fullness of his reformation; if we give credence to one who reports both his guilt and his penitence, we must record both

^k In a fragment of the records of a council, 6 May 1421, among other former debts not provided for, such as "ancient debts for Harfleur and Calais," occurs one item, "Debts of Henry IV;" and another, "Debts of the King, whilst he was Prince." We have seen that he was more than once compelled to borrow money on his plate and jewels to pay the King's soldiers.

accounts or neither. Before, however, we repeat what tradition has delivered down as to Henry's conduct and behaviour immediately upon his father's death, it may be well for us to review some of those testimonies to his character, his principles, and his conduct, which incidentally (but not on that account less acceptably or less satisfactorily) offer themselves to our notice, scattered up and down through the pages of former days.

Were we to draw an inference from the summary way in which many modern authors have cut short the question with regard to Henry of Monmouth's character as Prince of Wales, we should conclude that all the evidence was on one side; that, whilst "it is unfair to distinguished merit to dwell on the blemishes which it has regretted and reformed," still no doubt can be entertained of his having, "from a too early initiation into military life, stooped to practise irregularities between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five."¹ Whereas the fact is, that no allusion to such irregularities is made where we might have expected to find it; and that, independently of those more formal proofs to the contrary which are embodied in these pages, and to which we have above briefly referred, contemporary writers and undisputed documents supply us with materials for judging of his temper of mind and early habit,—the character, in short, with which

¹ Turner.

those who had the best opportunities of knowing him, were wont to associate his name.

All accounts agree in reporting him to have been devotedly fond of music. As the household expenses of his father informed us, he played upon the harp before he was ten years old; nor does he seem ever to have lost the habit of deriving gratification from the same art. It were easy to represent him prostituting this love of minstrelsy in the haunts of Eastcheap, and enjoying "through the sweetest morsel of the night" the songs of impurity in reckless Bacchanalian revels, self-condemned indeed, and therefore to be judged by others leniently :

" I feel me much to blame
So idly to profane the precious time :"^m

but nevertheless guilty of profaning the sacred art of music in the midst of worthless companions, and in the very sinks of low and dissolute profligacy. This it were easy to do, and this has been done. But history lends no countenance to such representations. The chroniclers, who refer again and again to his fondness for music, tell us that it showed itself in him under very different associations. "He delighted (as Stowe records) in songs, metres, and musical instruments; inso-much that in his chapel, among his private prayers he used our Lord's prayer, certain psalms of David, with divers hymns and canticles, all which I

^m Second Part of Henry IV, act ii. sc. 4.

have seen translated into English metre by John Lydgate, Monk of Bury." In this view we are strongly confirmed by several items of expense specified in the Pell Rolls, which record sums paid to organists and singers sent over for the use of Henry's chapel whilst he was in France; but this, being subsequent to his supposed conversion, cannot be alleged in evidence on the point at issue.^a It only shows that his early acquired love of music never deserted him.

In this place, moreover, we cannot refrain from anticipating, what might perhaps have been reserved with equal propriety to a subsequent page, that the same dry details of the Pell Rolls^o enable us to infer with satisfaction that Henry made his love of minstrelsy contribute to the gratification of himself and the partner of his joys and cares, supplying an intimation of domestic habits and conjugal satisfaction, without which a life passed in the splendour of royalty must be irksome, and blessed with which the cottage of the poor man possesses the most enviable treasure. Whether in their home at Windsor, or during their happy progress through England in the halls of York and Chester, or in the tented ground on the banks of the Seine before Melun, our imagination has solid foundation to

^a Pell Rolls, 7 Hen. V. 28th Oct.—D^r. 22nd Nov.

^o Pell Rolls, 8 Hen. V. (2nd Oct. 1420.) For the price of harps for the King and Queen, 8*l*. 13*s*. 4*d*. A subsequent item (Sept. 4, 1421), records payment of 2*l*. 6*s*. 8*d*. for a harp purchased at his command and sent to him in France.

build upon when we picture to ourselves Henry and his beloved princess passing innocently and happily, in minstrelsy and song, some of the hours spared from the appeals of justice, the exigencies of the state, or the marshalling of the battle-field.

But that Henry had also imbibed a real love of literature, and valued it highly, we possess evidence which well deserves attention. He was so much enamoured of the "Tale of Troy divine," that he directed John Lydgate, Monk of Bury St. Edmund's, to translate two poems, "The Death of Hector," and "The Fall of Troy," into English verse, that his own countrymen might not be behind the rest of Europe in their knowledge of the works of antiquity. The testimony borne by this author to the character of Henry for perseverance and stedfastness of purpose; for sound practical wisdom, and, at the same time, for a ready and ardent desire of the counsel of the wise; for mercy mingled with high and princely resolve and love of justice; for all those qualities which can adorn a Christian prince,—is so full in itself, and so direct, and (if honest) is so conclusive, that any memoirs of Henry's life and character would be culpably defective which should exclude it. The circumstance, also, of that testimony being couched in the vernacular language of the times, affords another point of interest to the English antiquary. Sometimes, indeed, we cannot help suspecting that the poem has undergone some verbal and grammatical alterations in

the course of the four centuries which have elapsed since it was penned; but that circumstance does not affect its credibility.

We may be fully aware that the evidence of a poet dedicating a work to his patron is open to the suspicion of partiality and flattery, and we may be willing that as much should be deducted on that score from the weight of the Monk of Bury's testimony as the reader may impartially pronounce just; still the naked fact remains unimpeached, that the poet was importuned by Henry, *when Prince*, to translate two works for the use of his countrymen. Lydgate, it must not be forgotten, expressly declares that he undertook the work at the "high command of Henry-Prince of Wales," and that he entered upon it in the autumn of 1412; the exact time when some would have us believe that he was in the mid-career of his profligacy, and at open variance with his father. However, let Lydgate's testimony be valued at a fair price; no one has ever impeached his character for honesty, or accused him of flattery. Still he may be guilty in both respects. And yet, in a work published at that very time, we can scarcely believe that any one would have addressed a wild profligate and noted prodigal in such verses; and it is very questionable whether, had he done so, any one who delighted in libertinism and boasted of his follies would have been gratified by the ascription to himself of a character

in all points so directly the reverse. If his patron were an example of irregularities and licentiousness, it is beyond the reach of ill-nature and credulity combined to hold it probable that he would have extolled him for self-restraint, for steady moral and mental discipline, for manliness at once and virtue, for delighting in ancient lore, and promoting its free circulation far and wide with the sole purpose and intent of sowing virtue and discountenancing vice. Such an effusion would have savoured rather of irony and bitter sarcasm, than of a desire to write what would be acceptable to the individual addressed. Lydgate's is the testimony, we confess, of a poet and a friend, but it is the testimony of a contemporary; of one who saw Henry in his daily walks, conversed with him often, had a personal knowledge of his habits and predilections; at all events, he was one who, by recording the fact that Henry, when Prince, urged him to translate for his countrymen two poems which he had himself delighted to read in the original, records at the same time the fact that Henry was himself a scholar, and the patron of ingenuous learning.

The testimony borne to the character of Henry of Monmouth by the poet Occleve^p is more indi-

^p Thomas Occleve, or Hoccleve, was Clerk of the Privy Seal to Henry IV; many small payments to him in that character are recorded in the Pell Rolls. He was probably born in the year 1370, and lived to be eighty years of age.

rect than Lydgate's, but not on that account less valuable or satisfactory. Occleve represents himself as walking pensive and sad, in sorrow of heart, pressed down by poverty, when he is met by a poor old man who accosts him with kindness. The poet then details their conversation. He communicates to the aged man, whom he calls father, his worldly wants and anxiety; who, addressing him by the endearing name of son, endeavours to suggest to him some means of procuring a remedy for his distress. His advice is, to write a poem or two with great pains, and present them to the Prince, with the full assurance that he would graciously accept them, and relieve his wants. They must be written, he says, with especial care, because of the Prince's great skill and judgment; whilst of their welcome the Prince's gentle and benign bearing towards all worthy suitors gives a most certain pledge. If Occleve deserves our confidence, Henry, in the estimation of his contemporaries, even whilst he was yet Prince of Wales, had the character of a gentle and kind-hearted man; one whose "heart was full applied to grant," and not to send a petitioner empty away. Instead of his revelling amidst loose companions at the Boar in East-Cheap, his contemporaries thought they should best meet his humour, if they supplied him with a "tale fresh and gay,"^a for his study when

^a Henry seems to have supplied himself with books on various other subjects of interest to him. He was, we are told,

he was in his own chamber, and was still. So far from thinking that an author would suit his taste by furnishing any of those works which minister what is grateful to a depraved mind, their admonition was, to write nothing which could sow the seeds of vice. They deemed him, if any one, able to set the true value on a literary work; and felt that, if they purposed to present any production of their own for his perusal and gratification, they must take especial pains to make it really good. They had formed, moreover, such an opinion of his high excellence, and his abhorrence of flattery, that they thought a man had better undertake a pilgrimage to Jerusalem than be guilty of any indiscretion in this particular. Let any impartial

fond of the chase; and we find payment in the Pell Rolls of 12*l.* 8*s.* to John Robart for writing twelve books on hunting for the use of the King (21 Nov. 1421). Payment is also made for a variety of books to the executors of Joan de Bohun, late Countess of Hereford, his grandmother, 24th May, 1420. Two petitions, presented after his death to the council of his infant son, contribute also incidentally their testimony to the same view of his character. The first prays that the books in the possession of the late King, which belonged to the Countess of Westmoreland, "The Chronicle of Jerusalem," and "The Journey of Godfrey Baylion," might be restored. The other petition is, that "a large book containing all the works of St. Gregory the Pope," left to the Church of Canterbury by Archbishop Arundell, and lent to Henry V. by Gilbert Umfraville, one of the executors of the Archbishop's will, and which was directed in the last will of the King to be restored, might be delivered up by the Convent of Shene, where it had been kept, to the Prior of Canterbury. — Rymer. Fæd. 11 Hen. IV.

person meditate on these things ; let him carefully read the extracts from Lydgate and Occleve which will be found in the Appendix ; and remembering on the one hand that they were poets anxious to obtain the favour of the court, and on the other that no single act or word of vice, or insolence, or levity, is recorded of Henry by any one of his contemporaries, let him then, like an honest days-man, pronounce his verdict.

The tradition with regard to Henry's conduct immediately upon his father's dissolution, as we gather it from various writers who lived near that time, is one as to the full admission of which even an eulogist of Henry of Monmouth needs not be jealous ; much less will the candid enquirer be apprehensive of its effect upon the character which he is investigating. The tradition then is, that Prince Henry was attending the sick-bed of his father, who, rousing from a slumber into which he had sunk for a while, asked him what the person was doing whom he observed in the room. " My father," replied Henry, " it is the priest, who has just now consecrated the body of our Lord ; lift up your heart in all holy devotion to God !" His father then most affectionately and fervently blessed him, and resigned his soul into the hands of his Redeemer. No sooner had the King breathed his last, than Henry, under an awful sense of his own unworthiness, and of the vanity of all worldly ob-

jects of desire, conscious also of the necessity of an abundant supply of divine grace to fit him for the discharge of the high duties of the kingly office, to which the voice of Providence then called him, retired forthwith into an inner oratory. There, prostrate in body and soul, and humbled to the dust before the majesty of his Creator, he made a full confession of his past life. Whether the words put into his mouth were the fruits of his biographer's imagination, or were committed to writing by Henry himself, (a supposition thought by some by no means improbable,) they are the words of a sincere Christian penitent. Henry, as we have frequently been reminded in these Memoirs, seems to have made much progress in the knowledge of sacred things, and to have become familiarly acquainted with the Holy Scriptures; and his confessional prayer breathes the aspirations of one who had made the divine word his study. He earnestly implores "his most loving Father to have mercy upon him, not suffering the miserable creature of his hand to perish, but making him as one of his hired servants." After he had thus poured out his soul to God in his secret chamber, he went under cover of the night to a minister of eminent piety, who lived near at hand at Westminster. To this servant of Christ he opened all his mind, and received by his kind and holy offices, the consolations and counsels, the strengthenings and refreshings, which true religion alone can give, and which it

never withholds from any one, prince or peasant, who seeks them with sincere purpose of heart, and applies for them in earnest prayer.

Between his accession and his coronation, Henry of Monmouth was much engaged in exercises of devotion; and various acts of self-humiliation are recorded of him. Even in the midst of the splendid banquet of his coronation, (as persons, says Elmham, worthy of credit can testify,) he neither ate nor drank; his whole mind and soul seemed to be absorbed by the thought of the solemn and deep responsibility under which he then lay. For three days he never suffered himself to indulge in repose on any soft couch; but with fasting, watching, and prayer, fervently and perseveringly implored the heavenly aid of the King of kings for the good government of his people. Doubtless, some may see in every penitential prayer an additional proof of his former licentiousness and dissipation: others, it is presumed, may not so interpret these scenes. Perhaps candour and experience may combine in suggesting to many Christians that the self-abasement of Henry should be interpreted, not as a criterion of his former delinquencies in comparison with the principles and conduct of others, but as an index rather of the standard of religious and moral excellence by which he tried his own life; that the rule with reference to which a practical knowledge of his own deficiency filled him with so great compunction and sorrow of heart, was not the

tone and fashion of the world, but the pure and holy law of God ; and that, consequently, his degree of contrition does not imply in him any extraordinary sense of immorality in his past days, but rather the profound reverence which he had formed of the divine law, and a consciousness of the lamentable instances in which he had failed to fulfil it.^r Be this as it may, a calm review of all the intimations with regard to his principles, his conduct, and his feelings, which history and tradition offer, seems to suggest to our thoughts the expressions of the Psalmist as words in which Prince Henry might well and sincerely have addressed the throne of grace. “ I have gone astray, like a sheep that is lost. O ! seek thy servant, for I do not forget thy commandments !”

^r It is quite curious and painful, but at the same time instructive, to observe how differently the same acts may be interpreted, accordingly as they are viewed by persons under the influence of various prejudices and peculiar associations. In the case of Henry of Monmouth, the confession of his own unworthiness is adduced in evidence only of his former habits of dissoluteness and dissipation. The same confession in his contemporary, Lord Cobham, is hailed only as an indication of the work of grace in his soul.— See Milner, Cent. XV. ch. i.

CHAPTER XV.

SHAKSPEARE.—THE AUTHOR'S RELUCTANCE TO TEST THE SCENES OF THE POET'S DRAMAS BY MATTERS OF FACT.—NECESSITY OF SO DOING.—HOTSPUR IN SHAKSPEARE THE FIRST TO BEAR EVIDENCE TO HENRY'S RECKLESS PROFLIGACY.—THE HOTSPUR OF HISTORY THE FIRST WHO TESTIFIES TO HIS CHARACTER FOR VALOUR, AND MERCY, AND FAITHFULNESS IN HIS DUTIES.—ANACHRONISMS OF SHAKSPEARE.—HOTSPUR'S AGE.—THE CAPTURE OF MORTIMER.—BATTLE OF HOMILDON.—FIELD OF SHREWSBURY.—ARCHBISHOP SCROPE'S DEATH.

THE Author has already intimated in his Preface the reluctance with which he undertook to examine the descriptions of the Prince of dramatic poets with a direct reference to the test of historical truth; and he cannot enter upon that inquiry in this place without repeating his regret, nor without alleging some of the reasons which seem to make the investigation an imperative duty in these Memoirs.

In our endeavours to ascertain the real character and conduct of Henry V, it is not enough that we close the volume of Shakspeare's dramas, determining to allow it no weight in the scale of evidence. If

nothing more be done, Shakspeare's representations will have weight, despite of our resolution. Were Shakspeare any ordinary writer, or were the parts of his remains which bear on our subject few, unimportant, and uninteresting, the biographer, without endangering the truth, might lay him aside with a passing caution against admitting for evidence the poet's views of facts and character. But the large majority of readers in England, who know anything of those times, have formed their estimate of Henry from the scenic descriptions of Shakspeare, or from modern historians who have been indebted for their information to no earlier or more authentic source than his plays. Even writers of a higher character, and to whom the English student is much indebted, would tempt us to rest satisfied with the general inferences to be drawn from the scenes of Shakspeare, though they willingly allow that much of the detail was the fruit only of his fertile imagination. A modern author^a opens his chapter on the reign of Henry V. with a passage, a counterpart to which we find expressed, or at least conveyed by implication, in many other writers, to whose views, however, the searcher after truth and fact cannot possibly accede. "With the traditionary irregularities of the youth of Henry V. we are early familiarized by the magical pen of Shakspeare, never more fascinating than in portraying the associates and frolics of this illustrious Prince.

^a Mr. Turner.

But the personifications of the poet must not be expected to be found in the chroniclers who have annalised this reign."—"The general facts of his irregularities, and their amendment, have never been forgotten ; but no historical Hogarth has painted the individual adventures of the princely rake."

It is not because we would palliate Henry's vices, if such there be on record, or disguise his follies, or wish his irregularities to be forgotten in the vivid recollections of his conquests, that we would try "our immortal bard" by the test of rigid fact. We do so, because he is the authority on which the estimate of Henry's character, as generally entertained, is mainly founded. Mr. Southey,^b indeed, is speaking only of his own boyhood when he says, "I had learned all I knew of English history from Shakspeare." But very many pass through life without laying aside or correcting those impressions which they caught at the first opening of their minds ; and never have any other knowledge of the times of which his dramas speak, than what they have learned from his representations. The great Duke of Marlborough is known to have confessed that all his acquaintance with English history was derived from Shakspeare : whilst not unfrequently persons of literary pursuits, who have studied our histories for themselves, are to the last under the practical influence of their earliest associations :

^b Preface to his Poetical Works.

unknown to their own minds the poet is still their instructor and guide. And this influence Shakspeare exercises over the historical literature of his country, though he was born more than one hundred and sixty years after the historical date of that scene in which he first speaks of the "royal rake's" strayings and unthriftiness; and though many new sources, not of vague tradition, but of original and undoubted record, which were closed to him, have been opened to students of the present day. It has indeed been alleged that he might have had means of information no longer available by us; that manuscripts are forgotten, or lost, which bore testimony to Henry's career of wantonness. But surely such a suggestion only renders it still more imperative to examine with strict and exact scrutiny into the poet's descriptions. If these are at all countenanced by a coincidence with ascertained historical facts, we must admit them as evidence, secondary indeed, but still the best within our reach. But if they prove to be wholly untenable when tested by facts, and irreconcilable with what history places beyond doubt, we have solid grounds for rejecting them as legitimate testimonies. We must consider them either as the fascinating but æry visions of a poet who lived after the intervention of more than a century and a half, or as inferences built by him on documents false and misleading.

It may be said that the poet, in his delineation

of the manners of the time, and in his vivid representations of the sallies and excesses of a prince notorious for his wildness and profligate habits, must not be shackled by the rigid and cold bands of historical verity, any more than we would require of him, in his description of a battle, the accuracy of a general's bulletin. But if a master poet should so describe the battle as to involve on the part of the commander the absence of military skill, and of clear conceptions of a soldier's duty, or ignorance of the enemy's position and strength, and of his own resources, or a suspicion of faintheartedness and ungallant bearing, truth would require us to analyse the description, and either to restore the fair fame of the commander, or to be convinced that he had justly lost his military character. On this principle we must refer Shakspeare's representations to a more unbending standard than a poet's fantasy.

The first occasion on which reference is found to the habits and character of Henry, occurs in the tragedy of Richard II, act v. scene 3, in which his father is represented as making inquiries, of "Percy and other lords," in such terms as these :

" Can no man tell of my *unthrifty* son?
 'Tis full THREE MONTHS since I did see him last :
 If any plague hang over us, 'tis he.
 I would to Heaven, my lords, he might be found !
 Inquire at London 'mongst the taverns there,
 For there, they say, he daily doth frequent,
 With unrestrained loose companions ;

Even such, they say, as stand in narrow lanes,
 And beat our watch, and rob our passengers ;
 While he, young, wanton, and effeminate boy,
 Takes on the point of honour to support
 So dissolute a crew."

To this inquiry PERCY is made to answer,

" My lord ! some two days since I saw the Prince,
 And told him of these triumphs held at Oxford."

Bolinbroke.—" And what said the gallant?"

Percy.—" His answer was—he would unto the stews,
 And from the common'st creature pluck a glove,
 And wear it as a favour ; and, with that,
 He would unhorse the lustiest challenger."

Bolinbroke.—" As dissolute as desperate ; yet, through
 both,

I see some sparkles of a better hope,
 Which elder days may happily bring forth."

To understand what degree of reliance should be placed upon this passage as a channel of biographical information, it is only necessary to recal to mind two points established beyond doubt from history: first, that the Prince was then not twelve years and a half old ; and secondly, that the circumstance, previously to which this lamentation must be fixed, took place NOT THREE MONTHS after the coronation, subsequently to which the King created this his " unthrifty son," " this gallant, dissolute as desperate," Prince of Wales.^c The scene is placed by Shakspeare at

^c Reference is here made to the creation of Henry as Prince of Wales, not in anywise for the purpose of insinuating that he

Windsor; and the conversation between Henry IV. inquiring about his son, and Percy, so unkindly fanning his suspicions, is ended abruptly by the breathless haste of Lord Albemarle, who breaks in upon the court to denounce the conspiracy against the King's life. This could not have been later than January 4, 1400; for on that day the conspirators entered Windsor, after Henry IV. having been apprised of their plot, had left that place for London. The coronation was celebrated on the 13th of the preceding October, and the Prince of Wales was born August 9, 1387. The whole year before his father's coronation he was in the safe-keeping of Richard II, through some months of it in Ireland; and, on Richard's return to England, he was left a prisoner in Trym Castle. How many days before the coronation he was brought from Ireland to his father, does not appear; probably messengers were sent for him immediately after Richard fell into the hands of Henry IV. The certainty is, that "*full three months* could not have passed" since

would not have been raised to that honour by his father, had he been the "desperate gallant" which the poet delineates, but solely to show that the King's lamentation cannot be historically correct. The poet, having fastened on the general tradition as to Henry's wildness, gives rein to his fancy, and would fain carry his readers along with him in the belief that Henry had absented himself for full three months from his paternal roof, and revelled in abandoned profligacy; whilst the facts with which the poet has connected it, fix the outbreaking of the Prince to a time when the real Henry was not twelve years and a half old. Shakspeare's poetry is not inconsistent with itself, but it is with historical verity.

they last saw each other ; the strong probability is, that both father and son had kept the feast of Christmas together at Windsor. That a boy of not twelve years and a half old, just returned from a year's safe-keeping in the hand of his father's enemy, and whom his father, not three months before, had created Prince of Wales with all the honours and expressions of regard ever shown on similar occasions, should have been the leader and supporter of a dissolute crew of unrestrained loose companions, the frequenter of those sinks of sin and profligacy which then disgraced the metropolis (as they do now), is an improbability so gross, that nothing but the excellence of Shakspeare's pen could have rendered an exposure of it necessary.^d

^d There are, however, other circumstances deserving our attention, which took place, some undoubtedly, and others most probably, within the three months preceding this very time. In the first place, the Commons, who had at the coronation sworn the same fealty to the Prince as to the King, on the 3rd of November petition that the creation of Henry as Prince of Wales might be entered on the record of Parliament ; and on the same day they pray the King that the Prince might not pass forth from this realm, (in consequence of the movements of the Scots,) " forasmuch as he is of tender age." In the course of that same month of November 1399, a negotiation was set on foot to bring about the espousals for a future union of the Prince with one of the daughters of the King of France. And about the same time (probably within a month of the scene of Shakspeare which we are examining,) the Prince makes a direct appeal to the council to fulfil the expressed wishes of his royal father as to his establishment, seeing that he was destitute of a suitable house and furniture ;

The second introduction of the same subject occurs in the scene in the court of London, the very day after the news arrived of Mortimer being taken by Owyn Glyndowr.

Westmoreland.—" But *yesternight* ; when all athwart there came

A post from Wales loaden with heavy news ;
Whose worst was that the noble Mortimer,
Leading the Herefordshire men to fight
Against the irregular and wild Glyndower,
Was by the rude hands of that Welshman taken."

The anachronism of Shakspeare, in making the two reports, of Mortimer's capture and of the battle of Homildon, reach London on the same day, though there was an interval of more than three months between them, only tends to show that we must not look to him as a channel of historical accuracy. How utterly inappropriate is the desponding lamentation of Henry IV, the bare reference to actual dates is alone needed to show.

Westmoreland.—" Faith ! 'tis a conquest for a prince to boast of."

K. Henry.—" Yea : there thou makest me sad, and makest me sin

In envy that my Lord Northumberland
Should be the father of so blest a son ;
Whilst I, by looking on the praise of him,
See riot and dishonour stain the brow

whilst not a hint occurs in allusion to any extravagance, or folly, or precocious dissipation, in any single document of the time.

Of my young Harry. O that it could be proved
That some night-tripping fairy had exchanged
In cradle-clothes our children where they lay,
And called mine Percy, his Plantagenet;
Then I would have his Harry, and he mine!
But let him from my thoughts."

In this glowing page of Shakspeare is preserved one of those exquisite, fascinating illusions which are scattered up and down throughout his never-dying remains, and which, arresting us everywhere, hold the willing imagination spell-bound, till, after reflection, Truth rises upon the mind, and with one gleam of her soft but omnipotent light varies the charm, and contrasts the satisfaction of reality with the pleasures of fiction. The poet's imagery paints to our mind's eye Harry Hotspur and Harry of Monmouth lying each in his "cradle-clothes" on some one and the same night, when the powers of Fairy-land might have exchanged the boys, and called Percy, Plantagenet. To effect such a change, however, of the first-born sons of Northumberland and Bolinbroke, an extent of power and skill must have been in requisition far beyond what their warmest advocates are wont to assign to those "night-tripping" personages. Hotspur was at least one-and-twenty years old when Henry of Monmouth "lay in his cradle-clothes." The pencil also of the painter has lent its aid to confirm and propagate the same delusion as to the relative ages of these two warriors. In the representation (for example) of the Battle-field of Shrewsbury,

Hotspur and Henry, the heroes in the fore-ground, are models of two gallant youths, equal in age, struggling for the mastery: and in the chamber-scene, whilst Henry is represented in all the freshness of a beardless youth, his father shows the worn-out veteran; his brow and cheeks deeply furrowed, his whole frame borne down towards the grave by length of days as much as by infirmities, though when he died his age did not exceed his forty-seventh year.

The time of Hotspur's birth has generally been considered matter only for conjecture; but whether we draw our inferences from undisputed facts, and the clearest deductions of sound argument, or rest only on the direct evidence now for the first time, it is presumed, brought forward, we cannot regard Hotspur at the very lowest calculation as a single year younger than Henry of Monmouth's father, the very Bolinbroke whom the poet makes to utter such a lamentation and such a wish. Bolinbroke's birth-day cannot be assigned (as we have seen) to an earlier date than April 6, 1366; and the *Annals of the Peerage*^e refer Hotspur's birth to May 20, 1364.^f The Author, however, is disposed to think that the *Annals* have antedated his birth by more than a year at least. In

^e See Collins' *Peerage* by Brydges, vol. ii. p. 267.

^f The same authorities record that he was knighted at the coronation of Richard II, July 16, 1377.

the Scrope and Grosvenor controversy,[§] the record of which supplied us with the ages of Glyndowr and his brother, the commissioners examined both Hotspur and his father. The father, usually called the "aged Earl," gave his testimony on the 19th November 1386, as "the Earl of Northumberland, of the age of forty-five years, having borne arms thirty years." Hotspur, who was examined on the 30th of the preceding October, that is, in the year before Henry of Monmouth was born, gave his testimony as "Sir Henry Percy, of the age of twenty years." Hotspur must, therefore, have been born between the end of October 1365 and the end of October 1366. And if the annalists are right in fixing upon the day of the year on which he was born, his birth-day was in the month next following the birth-day of Bolinbroke. On the most probable calculation, he might have been five months older than Bolinbroke; he could not have been seven months younger. It is a curious and interesting circumstance, that, instead of specifying the number of years through which he had borne arms, Hotspur referred the commissioners to the first occasion of his having seen and shared the real service of

§ "Le Count de Northumberland del age de XLV ans; armez de xxx ans."

"Mons. Henr' de Percy del age de vynt ans, armez premicrement, quant la chastell de Berwick etait pris par les Escoces, et quant le rescous fuist fait."

battle : “ First armed when the castle of Berwick was taken by the Scots, and when the rescue was made.” The surprise of Berwick by the Scots took place on the Thursday before St. Andrew’s day in the year 1378, (which fell on November 25,) so that Hotspur passed his noviciate in the field of battle when he was only just past his twelfth year, and almost nine years before Henry of Monmouth was born. In 1388, when Henry was only one year old, Hotspur was taken prisoner by the Scots. His eldest son, whom Henry with so much generosity restored to his honours and estates, was born February 3, 1393.^h

^h We cannot read the document on which these observations are founded without being reminded at how early an age in those times the youth of our country were expected to take up arms, and follow some experienced captain, or even themselves lead their warriors to the field. When Hotspur accompanied his father to the rescue of Berwick, he was only in his thirteenth year ; his father had borne arms from the age of fifteen ; and Henry of Monmouth (accompanied we know by a tutor or guardian, as probably Hotspur was at Berwick) was certainly in Wales, “ chastising the rebels,” soon after he had completed his thirteenth year. Another reflection, forced upon the mind by a familiar acquaintance with the political and the domestic history of those times, is on the very low average of human life at that period of the English monarchy. Few reached what is now called old age ; and persons are spoken of as old, who would now be scarcely considered to have passed the meridian of life. It would form a subject of an interesting, and perhaps a very useful inquiry, were a philosophical antiquary (who would found his conclusions on a wide induction of facts, and not seek for evidence in support of any previously adopted theory,) to trace the existence, and operation,

Though these facts prove that Shakspeare has spread through the world a most erroneous opinion of the relative ages and circumstances of Bolin-

and extent of those causes, physical and moral, which exercise doubtless important influences over human life, and, under Providence, contract or lengthen the number of our days here. Unquestionably, such an investigator would immediately find many changes adopted in the present day conducive to longevity, in the structure of our habitations, the nature of our clothing, our habits of cleanliness, our food, comparative moderation in the use of inebriating liquors, with many other causes of health now believed to exist among us. To two causes of the average shortness of life, in operation through that range of years to which these Memoirs chiefly refer, the Author's mind has been especially drawn in the course of his researches: one of a political character,—in itself far more obvious, and chiefly affecting men; the other arising from habits of domestic life with regard to one of our institutions of all the most universally comprehensive,—a cause chiefly, but far from exclusively, affecting the life of females. The first cause, awful and appalling, is seen in the precarious tenure of human life, during the violence of those political struggles which deluged the whole land with blood. Those families seem to have been rare exceptions, of which no member forfeited his life on the scaffold or in the field; those houses were few which the scourge of civil or foreign wars passed over without leaving one dead. The second cause is traced to the very early age at which marriages were then solemnized. The day of Nature's trial came before the constitution had gained strength for the struggle, and an awful proportion of females was thus prematurely hurried to the grave; whilst the offspring also shared in the weakness of the parent. Comparatively a small minority sunk by gradual and calm decay; in the case of very few could the comparison of Job's re-prover be applied with truth, "Thou shalt come to the grave in full age, as a shock of corn cometh in his season."

broke, Hotspur, and Henry of Monmouth,—a circumstance, indeed, in itself of no great importance,—the question on which we are engaged will be more immediately and strongly affected if it can be shown precisely, that at the very time when (according to the poet's representation) Henry IV. uttered this lamentation, expressive of deep present sorrow at the reckless misdoings of his son, and of anticipations of worse, that very son was doing his duty valiantly and mercifully in Wales.

On the lowest calculation, a full month before Mortimer's capture, the young royal warrior had scoured the whole country of Glyndwr in person, and had burnt two of Owyn's mansions; whilst the strong probability is, that he had headed his troops on that expedition more than a year before.

It is very remarkable (though Shakspeare doubtless never became acquainted with the circumstance) that the identical Percy whom he makes Henry IV. desire to have been his son, instead of his own Henry, bears ample testimony, at least a full year previously, to the valour and kind-heartedness of him on whose brow the poet makes his father lament "the stain of riot and dishonour."

Sir Edmund Mortimer was taken by Glyndowir at Melienydd in Radnor, June 12th, 1402; and, as early as the 3rd of May 1401, Percy wrote from Caernarvon to the council that North Wales was obedient to the law, except the rebels of Conway and Rees Castles, who were in the mountains, whom

he expresses his expectation that the Prince of Wales would subdue. "These will be right well chastened," said he, "if God please, by the force and governance which my lord the Prince *has* sent against them, as well of his council as of his retinue." In the same letter Hotspur informs the King's council that the commons of the counties of Caernarvon and Merioneth (who had come before him in the sessions which he was then holding as Chief Justice of North Wales) had humbly expressed their thanks to the Prince for the great pains of his kind good-will in endeavouring to obtain their pardon."ⁱ Henry Prince of Wales, whom the poet makes his father thus to disparage at the mere mention of Henry Percy's victory, would lose nothing in point of prowess, and generosity, and high-minded bearing, at this very early period of his youth, by a comparison either with Percy himself, or with any other of his contemporaries, whose names are recorded in history.

The next passage of our historical dramatist which requires to be examined, occurs in that very affecting interview between Henry and his father on the news of Percy's rebellion, and the resolution declared to take the field at Shrewsbury.^k

"I know not whether God will have it so,
For some displeasing service I have done,

ⁱ See these facts stated historically in previous chapters of this volume.

^k 1 Hen. IV. act iii. scene 1.

That, in his secret, doom out of my blood
 He breeds revengement and a scourge for me.
 But thou dost, in thy passages of life,
 Make me believe that thou art only marked
 For the hot vengeance and the rod of heaven,
 To punish my mistreadings. Tell me else,
 Could such inordinate and low desires,
 Such barren, base, such lewd, such mean attempts,
 Such barren pleasures, rude society,¹
 As thou art matched withal and grafted to,
 Accompany the greatness of thy blood,
 And hold their level with thy princely heart?

¹ It is curious to contrast this description of his habits and pursuits, written by the Prince of tragedians a century and a half after Henry's death, with the advice represented to have been given by an old man to a young aspiring poet during his very lifetime. The Author is conscious of the tautology of which he is guilty in again recommending the reader not to pass over unread the extracts in the Appendix from Occleve and Lydgate.

“ Write to him a goodly tale or two,
 On which he may disport him at night.
 His high prudence hath insight very
 To judge if it be well made or nay.
 Write him nothing that sowneth to vice.
 Look if find thou canst any treatise
 Grounded on his estate's wholesomeness.”—Occleve.

“ Because he hathe joy and great dainty
 To read in books of antiquity,
 To find only *virtue to sow*,
 By example of them; and also to eschew
 The *cursed vice of sloth and idleness*:
 So he enjoyed in *virtuous* business,
 In all that *longeth to manhood*
 He *busyeth* ever.”—Lydgate.

Thy place in council thou hast rudely lost,
Which by thy younger brother is supplied ;
And art almost an alien to the hearts
Of all the court, and princes of my blood."

The battle of Shrewsbury was fought July 21, 1403. The tragedian represents Henry the Prince as at this period in the full career of his unbridled extravagances ; his father bewailing his sad degeneracy, himself pleading nothing in excuse, praying for pardon, and promising amendment. It must appear passing strange to those who have drawn their estimate of those years of Prince Henry's youth from Shakspeare, to find the real truth to be this. Not only was he not then in London the profligate debauchee, the reckless madcap, the creature of "vassal fear and base inclination," "the nearest and dearest of his father's foes ;" not only was he acting valiantly in defence of his father's throne ; but that very father's own pen is the instrument to bear chief testimony to his valour and noble merits at that very hour. It is as though history were designed on set purpose, and by especial commission, to counteract the bewitching fictions of the poet. Henry IV. was on his road to assist Hotspur and the Earl of Northumberland, in utter ignorance of their rebellion. Arrived at Higham Ferrers, he wrote to his council, informing them that he had received, as well by his son Henry's own letters, as by the report of his messengers, most satisfactory accounts of this very dear and

well-beloved son the Prince, which gave him very great pleasure.^m He then directs them to send the Prince 1000*l.* to enable him to keep his forces together. This letter is dated July 10, 1403, just eleven days before the battle of Shrewsbury. The King heard of Hotspur's rebellion on his arrival at Burton on Trent, from which place he dates his proclamation. Henry of Monmouth was appointed Lieutenant of Wales on the 4th of March 1403; and he was with his men-at-arms and archers there, discharging the duties of a faithful son and valiant young warrior, when Hotspur revolted; and he left his charge in Wales, not to revel in London, but only to join his own to his father's forces, and fight for their kingdom on the field of Shrewsbury.

The extraordinary confusion of place and time, pervading the "Second Part of King Henry IV.," is only equalled by the mistaken view which the writer gives of the character of Henry of Monmouth. News of the overthrow of Archbishop Scrope is brought to London on the very day on which Henry IV. sickens and dies; whereas that King was himself in person in the north, and insisted upon the execution of the Archbishop, just eight years before. The Archbishop was beheaded on Whitmonday (June 8) in the year 1405. Henry IV. died March 20, 1413. And instead of Henry, the Prince, being either at Windsor hunting, or in

^m See these facts stated historically in former pages of this volume.

London "with Poins and other his continual followers," when his father was depressed and perplexed by the rebellion in the north, he was doing his duty well, gallantly, and to the entire satisfaction of his father. We have a letter, dated Berkhemstead, March 13, 1405, written by the King to his council, with a copy of his son Henry's letter announcing the victory over the Welsh rebels at Grosmont in Monmouthshire, which was won on Wednesday the 11th of that month. The King writes with great joy and exultation, bidding his council to convey the glad tidings to the mayor and citizens of London, that "they (he says) may rejoice with us, and join in praises to our Creator."

Thus does history prove that, in every instance of Shakspeare's fascinating representations of Henry of Monmouth's practices, the poet was guided by his imagination, which, working only on the vague tradition of a sudden change for the better in the Prince immediately on his accession, and magnifying that change into something almost miraculous, has drawn a picture which can never be seen without being admired for its life, and boldness, and colouring; but which, as an historical portrait, is not only unlike the original, but misleading and unjust in essential points of character.

It has been said, and perhaps with truth, to what extent soever we may believe Shakspeare to have made "Europe ring from side to side" with the vices and follies, the riots and extravagances, of

the young Prince, yet that he had spread his fame and glory far more widely, and excited an incomparably greater interest in his character, than history itself, however full, and however true in recording his merits, could have done. The admirer therefore of the Prince's character, who reflects on Shakspeare, is held to be ungrateful to Henry's best benefactor; and, as far as his influence reaches, tends to check the interest excited for the hero of his choice. But, whilst he recalls with grateful reminiscence the enjoyment which he has often drawn himself freely from the same well-head, the Author, in attempting to distinguish between truth and fiction, would on no account damp the ardour with which his countrymen will still derive pleasure from these scenes of "Nature's child;" and he trusts that, whilst he has supplied solid and substantial ground for Englishmen still retaining Henry of Monmouth in their affections, among their favourite princes and kings, his work has no tendency to close against a single individual those sources of intellectual delight, which will be open wide to all, whilst literature itself shall have a place on earth.

CHAPTER XVI.

STORY OF PRINCE HENRY AND THE CHIEF JUSTICE. — FIRST FOUND IN THE WORK OF SIR THOMAS ELYOT, PUBLISHED NEARLY A CENTURY AND A HALF SUBSEQUENTLY TO THE SUPPOSED TRANSACTION. — SIR JOHN HAWKINS — HALL — HUME. — NO ALLUSION TO THE CIRCUMSTANCE IN THE EARLY CHRONICLERS. — DISPUTE AS TO THE JUDGE. — VARIOUS CLAIMANTS OF THE DISTINCTION. — GASCOYNE — HANKFORD — HODY — MARKHAM. — SOME INTERESTING PARTICULARS WITH REGARD TO GASCOYNE, LATELY DISCOVERED AND VERIFIED. — IMPROBABILITY OF THE ENTIRE STORY.

IN a little work, not long since published, intended to interest the rising generation in the history of their own country, the preface assigns as the author's reason for not coming down later than the Revolution of 1689, "that, from that period, history becomes too distinct and important to be trifled with." The doctrine involved in the position, which is implied here, *that the previous history of our country may be trifled with*, is so dangerous to the cause of truth, that we may well believe the sentiment to have fallen from the pen of the author unadvisedly. It is, however, unhappily a principle on which too many, in works of far higher

stamp and graver moment, have justified themselves in substituting their own theories, and hypotheses, and descriptive scenes, for the unbending strictness of fact, thus sapping the foundation of all confidence in history. It is not the poet only, and the fascinating author of historical romances, who have thus "trifled with history;" our annalists and chroniclers, our lawyers and moralists, often, no doubt unwittingly, certainly unscrupulously, have countenanced and aided the same pernicious practice. It is frequently curious and amusing to trace the various successive gradations, beginning with surmise, and proceeding through probability onward to positive assertion, each writer borrowing from his predecessor; and then in turn, from his own filling-up of the outline, furnishing somewhat more for another, who supplies at length the whole historical portrait, complete in all its form and colouring. Had the author above referred to not taken to himself practically in the body of his work the indulgence which his latitudinarian principle recognizes in the preface, he would not have so distorted facts in his "story of Madcap Harry and the Old Judge," for the purpose of making a pretty consistent tale,—consistent with itself, but not with the truth of history,—to amuse children in their earliest days, at the risk of misleading them, and giving them a wrong bias through their lives.

In examining the alleged fact of Henry's violence and insults exhibited in a court of justice,

there is much greater difficulty than may generally be supposed, in consequence of the entire silence of all contemporary annalists and chroniclers. Not one word occurs asserting it; no allusion to the circumstance whatever is found previously to the reign of Henry VIII, nearly a century and a half after Henry V.'s accession. Hume^a asserts it on the authority of Hall; and Hall has exaggerated the alleged facts most egregiously, and most unjustifiably. Whether the fact took place, and, if it did, what were the time, the place, and the circumstances, the reader must judge for himself. The present treatise professes only to bring together the evidences on all sides fairly.

It has been already stated that no historian or chronicler, (whose work is now in existence and known,) for nearly one hundred and fifty years, has ever alluded to the transaction. The first writer in

^a Hume is no authority on any disputed point. An anecdote, of the accuracy of which the Author has no doubt, throws a strong suspicion on the work of that writer, and marks it as a history on which the student can place no dependence. Hume made application at one of the public offices of State Records for permission to examine its treasures. Not only was leave granted, but every facility was afforded, and the documents bearing upon the subject immediately in hand were selected and placed in a room for his exclusive use. He never came. Shortly after his work appeared: and, on one of the officers expressing his surprise and regret that he had not paid his promised visit, Hume said, "I find it far more easy to consult printed works, than to spend my time on manuscripts." No wonder Hume's England is a work of no authority.

whom it is found is Sir Thomas Elliott (or Elyot), who, in a work called *The Governour*, dedicated to Henry VIII. about the year 1534, thus particularizes the occurrence. Elyot gives no reference to his authority.

“ The most renowned Prince, King Henry V. late King of England, during the life of his father, was noted to be fierce and of wanton courage. It happened that one of his servants, whom he well favoured, was, for felony by him committed, arraigned at the King’s Bench. Whereof the Prince being advertised, and incensed by light persons about him, in furious rage came hastily to the bar, where his servant stood as a prisoner, and commanded him to be ungyved and set at liberty : whereat all men were abashed, reserved [except] the Chief Justice, who humbly exhorted the Prince to be contented that his servant might be ordered according to the ancient laws of this realm ; or, if he would have him saved from the rigour of the laws, that he should obtain, if he might, from the King his father his gracious pardon, whereby no law or justice should be derogate. With which answer the Prince nothing appeased, but rather more inflamed, endeavoured himself to take away his servant. The Judge, considering the perilous example and inconvenience that might thereby issue, with a valiant spirit and courage commanded the Prince upon his allegiance to leave the prisoner and depart his way. With which commandment

the Prince being set all in a fury, all chafed and in a terrible manner came up to the place of judgment, men thinking that he would have slain the Judge, or have done to him some damage; but the Judge, sitting still without moving, declaring the majesty of the King's place of judgment, and with an assured and bold countenance, had to the Prince these words following: 'Sir, remember yourself: I keep here the place of the King your sovereign lord and father, to whom ye owe double obedience; wherefore eftsoons in his name I charge you desist of your wilfulness and unlawful enterprise, and from henceforth give good example to those which hereafter shall be your proper subjects. And now, for your contempt and disobedience, go you to the prison of the King's Bench, whereunto I commit you; and remain ye there prisoner until the pleasure of the King your father be further known.' With which words being abashed, and also wondering at the marvellous gravity of that worshipful Justice, the noble Prince laying his weapon apart, doing reverence, departed; and went to the King's Bench, as he was commanded. Whereat his servants disdainingly came and showed the King all the whole affair. Whereat he awhile studying, after as a man all ravished with gladness, holding his hands and eyes up towards heaven abraidened, saying with a loud voice, 'O merciful God, how much am I above other men bound to your infinite

goodness, specially that ye have given me a Judge who feareth not to minister justice, and also a son who can suffer semblably, and obey justice ! ”

Sir John Hawkins,^b when he cites this passage as evidence of an ebullition of wanton insolence and unrestrained impetuosity, in illustration of the character of Henry, to whom he ascribes the unjustifiable suppression of an act of parliament, lays himself open to blame in more points than one. In the first place, he ought not, as regards the suppression of an act of parliament, to have charged upon Henry, as a self-willed act, what, to say the very least, was equally the act of the whole Privy Council ; and then he ought not to have endeavoured to brand him with disgrace on the testimony of a witness who wrote nearly a century and a half after the asserted event.

Hall, who wrote only at the commencement of the reign of Edward VI, (the first edition of his work having appeared in 1548,) thus states the charge against Henry :

“ For imprisonment of one ^c of his wanton mates and unthrifty playfares, he strake the Chief Justice with his fist on his face ; for which offence he was not only committed to streight prison, but also of

^b Pleas of the crown.

^c Shakspeare represents Henry as having given the Chief Justice the blow some time before the expedition against the Archbishop of York.—2 Hen. IV. act i.

his father put out of the Privy Council and banished the court, and his brother Thomas Duke of Clarence elected president of the King's counsail, to his great displeasure and open reproach."

Perhaps it might be argued without unfairness, that the great variation and discrepancy in the traditions respecting this affair in the Prince's life would induce us to believe that, at all events, something of the kind actually took place; that, without some foundation in real fact, so extraordinary a transaction could never have been invented; that, whatever difficulty we may find in filling up the outline, the broad reality of an insolent and violent bearing shown by the Prince to a Judge on the bench ought to be admitted; and that any variation as to the person of the Judge, or the court over which he presided, or the time at which the incident might have taken place, or the degree of insult and personal violence exhibited, is unessential, and proves only the inaccuracy in detail of various accounts, all of which combine, independently of those minute circumstances, to establish the main point. To this argument it might also be added, that the very circumstance of an inspection of original documents presenting names of real living persons, identically the same with those which Shakspeare has given to the minor heroes of his drama, (such as Bardolf, Pistol, &c.) intimates a knowledge on his part of the transactions of those times which entitles him to a higher degree

of credit, as seeming to imply that he might have had recourse to documents which are now lost :

“ Sir, Here comes the nobleman who committed the Prince for striking him about BARDOLF.”

2 HEN. IV. act. i.

On the other side, it might with equal, perhaps with greater fairness be argued, that this is not one of those cases in which various independent authorities bear separate testimony to one important fact; whilst minor discrepancies as to time and place, and persons and circumstances, tend only to confirm the testimony, placing the authority above suspicion, and exempting the case from all idea of conspiring witnesses. Such arguments are then only sound when the witnesses are contemporary with the fact, or live soon after its alleged date. But when chroniclers and biographers, who write immediately of the times and of the life of the person charged, recording circumstances far less important and characteristic, omit all mention whatever of an event which must have been notorious to all, — but of which no trace whatever can be found, nor any allusion directly or indirectly to it is discovered, for more than a century and a quarter after the death of the accused, — the investigator appears to be justified in requiring some auxiliary evidence ; at all events, such discrepancies cease to contribute the alleged aid to the establishment of the main fact. When, for example, the Chronicle of London records an affray in East-Cheap between the townsmen and

the Princes,^d mentioning by name Thomas and John, and registers the journeys of John of Gaunt, the execution of Rhys Dui, the Welshman, with unnumbered events, far less important and notorious than must have been the commitment to prison of the heir-apparent of the throne, and on that circumstance is altogether silent, not having the slightest allusion to anything of the kind; and when those biographers who lived and wrote nearest to the time (such as Elmham, Livius, Otterbourne, Hardyng, Walsingham, all of whom speak more or less strongly of his irregularities and youthful vices, and subsequent reformation,) never allude to any story of the sort, and apparently had no knowledge even of any tradition respecting it; the charge either of partiality or incredulity does not seem to lie at the door of any one who might doubt the reality of the whole. It is not as though the deed were regarded as having fixed an indelible stain on the Prince's memory, and therefore his partial biographers would gladly have buried it in oblivion. Sir

^d The Chronicle of London, twice within a very brief space, records such a disturbance as the Chief Justice in Shakspeare is represented to have hastened "to stint;" but in each case, by adding the names of the King's sons, rescues Henry from all share in the affray.

"In this year (the 11th, 1410,) was a fray made in East-Cheap by the King's sons, Thomas and John, with the men of the town."

"This year, (the 12th, 1411,) on St. Peter's even, (June 28,) was a great debate in Bridge Street, between the Lord Thomas's men and the men of London."

Thomas Elyot (and his seems to have been the general opinion) appears to have considered the issue of the transaction as far more redounding to the Prince's honour, than its progress stamped him with disgrace; and he attracts the reader's especial attention to it by a marginal note: "A good Judge, a good Prince, a good King." It is curious to observe the progress of this story. Sir Thomas Elyot, the first in point of time who states it, makes no mention either "of the blow on the Chief Justice's face with his fist," or the removal of the Prince from the council, and the substitution of his brother. Hall, on whom Hume builds, adds both those facts; and then Hume in his turn proceeds to affirm that his father, during the *latter years* of his life, had excluded him *from all share in public business*. Had Hume examined the original documents for himself, instead of building only upon "printed accounts" of later date by more than a century, he could not have fallen into this error. But a refutation of this mistake, only incidental to our present question, belonged to another part of this work, where it may be found in its chronological order. To the ancillary argument drawn from the names of Henry's supposed reckless companions in Shakspeare occurring in the records of real history, it may be answered, that if that fact proved anything, it proves too much. If, indeed, men of those names were found in Henry's company, as Prince of Wales, either in London, in Wales, or in Calais, and were

afterwards lost sight of, or seen only in obscurity and separate from him, that fact might be regarded as confirmatory of the popular tradition. But the reality is otherwise. The names of Pistol and Bardolf^e are found among those who accompanied the King in his careers of victory in France: and in the very year before Henry's death (a fact hitherto unnoticed by historians) William Bardolf was one of the Barons of the Cinque Ports, and Lieutenant of Calais; a post which he appears to have held for some years with great credit, and enjoying the royal favour and confidence. William Bardolf had been employed ten years before by Henry IV, as one of the commissioners appointed to treat with the Duke of Burgundy.^f

It is a curious fact, that the magnanimous conduct of the Judge, tending so much to his renown, has induced various families and biographers to

^e The name of John Fastolfe, Esq. occurs in the muster rolls of Henry on his first expedition to France. But it must be remembered that not Falstaff, but Sir John Oldcastle, was made the buffoon on the stage at first, and continued so for many years, till the offence which it gave led to the substitution of Falstaff. "Stage poets," says Fuller, "have themselves been very bold with, and others very merry at, the memory of Sir John Oldcastle; whom they have fancied a boon companion, a jovial roister, and yet a coward to boot, contrary to the credit of all chronicles, owning him a martial man of merit. The best is, Sir John Falstaff hath relieved the memory of Sir John Oldcastle, and of late is substituted buffoon in his place.—Church History, iv. 38."

^f See Pell Rolls (Issue), 8 Henry V, March 11; 9 Henry V, April 1. See also Acts of Privy Council, vol. ii. pp. 5, 344, &c.

challenge the credit of the affair for their friends. No less than four claimants require us to examine their pretensions. Shakspeare and the world at large have consented to give the honour to Gascoyne; whilst the friends of Markham, Hankford, and Hody, have each in their turn disputed the palm with him. Of these four claimants two are reckoned among the "worthies of Devon." With regard to Sir John Hody, "to whom some of our countrymen (says Mr. Prince) would ascribe the honour," we need only add the sentence with which this antiquary sets aside his claim, — "But this cannot be, for that he was not a judge until thirty years afterwards."

The claims of Hankford to this distinction rest on the authority of Risdon, the Devon antiquary, who began his work in 1605, and did not finish it till 1630. Mr. Prince would add the authority of Baker's Chronicle; but, were Baker's authority of any value, he does not mention the name of the Judge; and, by specifying that the transaction took place at the *King's Bench* bar, and that the Prince was committed to the *Fleet*, he shows that no dependence is to be placed on his authority. If it took place at the King's Bench bar, the King's Bench prison would have received the royal culprit; and if, as Risdon says, the Judge's sentence was, "I command you, prisoner, to the King's Bench," not Hankford, but Gascoyne, was the Judge. Hankford was not appointed to the King's Bench before

March 29th, 1 Henry V, some days after the supposed culprit had ascended the throne.^g

The claim of Judge Markham, it is presumed, is supported only by the testimony of an ancient manuscript preserved in his family. He was Chief

^g There is so much of fable mingled with the traditionary biography of this "Devonshire worthy," that most persons probably will dismiss the claim altogether. He became weary of his life, and, being determined to rid himself from the direful apprehensions of dangerous approaching evils, he adopted this strange mode of suicide: having given strict orders to his keeper to shoot any person at night who would not stand when challenged, he threw himself into the keeper's way, and was shot dead upon the spot. "This story (says the author) is authenticated by several writers, and the constant tradition of the neighbourhood; and I myself have been shown the rotten stump of an old oak under which he is said to have fallen." But as to the cause which drove him to this rash act the same writers vary, and tradition is strangely diversified. One author says, that "on the deposition of Richard II, who had made him a judge, he was so terrified by the sight of infinite executions and bloody assassinations, which caused him continual agonies, that, upon apprehension what his own fate might be, he fell into that melancholy which hastened his end." His re-appointment to the office on September 30, 1401, by Henry IV, would have relieved him from these apprehensions. Others say, that, "having committed the Prince to prison in his younger days, he was afraid that, on the sceptre of justice falling into his hands, that royal culprit would take a too severe revenge thereof; and this filled him with such insuperable melancholy, that he was driven to the desperate act of self-murder." But his appointment to succeed Gascoyne as Chief Justice of the King's Bench, March 29, 1413, must have conquered that melancholy; and he discharged that office through the whole of Henry V.'s reign, and through one year of Henry VI, after which he died, December 20, 1422.

Justice of the Common Pleas from 20 Richard II. to 9 Henry IV.^h Some colour, however, is given to this claim by the vague tradition that Prince Henry was committed to the Fleet; to which prison alone the Judges of the Common Pleas commit their prisoners. But if he was the Judge who committed the Prince, and if he died in the 9th of Henry IV,ⁱ the allegation that the Prince was then dismissed from the council falls to the ground; for at that time, and long after, he seems to have been in the very zenith of his power.

If, then, Prince Henry was ever guilty of the gross insult and violence in a court of justice, and the firm, intrepid Judge, to uphold and vindicate the majesty of the law, committed him to prison for the offence, the probabilities preponderate in favour of Gascoyne having been the individual. But this supposition also is not free from difficulties. He was made Chief Justice of the King's Bench^k 15th November, 2 Henry IV. (1401.) And of his intrepidity^l in the discharge of that office, we have

^h In a manuscript, a copy of which was shown to a gentleman who gave the Author the information, belonging to the Markhams, an ancient family of Nottinghamshire, of about the date of Queen Elizabeth, the honour is claimed for Markham: and in an old play, which turns the whole into broad farce, (probably anterior to Shakspeare,) the Judge is made to commit the Prince to the Fleet.

ⁱ Or even if he died, as some say, on St. Sylvester's Day, (December 30,) 1409.

^k Pat. 2 Henry IV. p. 1. m. 28.

^l How far the high esteem in which the memory of Judge

already mentioned an especial instance at the death of Archbishop Scrope, if what Clemens Maydestone, a contemporary, says, be true. Henry IV, who had the person of the Archbishop in his power, called upon Gascoyne, who was with him, to pass on his prisoner the sentence of death; but, at the risk of losing the King's favour and his own appointment, he positively refused, on the ground of its illegality. The Archbishop, however, was condemned to be beheaded by one Fulthorp, (or, as some say, Fulford,) afterwards a judge, as we have stated in its place. Gascoyne was subsequently sent with Lord Ross, by the council, to the north, as one of those in whom the King was known to have especial confidence, as soon as the news arrived in London of Lord Bardolf's hostile movement; and we find him still continued in the office of Chief Justice, apparently without having incurred the King's displeasure.

No adage is more sound than that which affirms a little learning to be a dangerous thing. More than fifty years ago, the *Gentleman's Magazine*^m triumphantly maintained, that, at all events, Shakspeare had deviated from history in bringing Henry

Gascoyne has been held may be owing to the tradition concerning Henry of Monmouth, we need not inquire. His name has constantly been held in great honour. Judge Denison, by his own especial desire, was buried close to the grave of Gascoyne.

^m The Magazine is followed in its erroneous views by subsequent writers.

V. and Gascoyne together after the Prince's accession, because Gascoyne died in the life-time of Henry IV. This view has generally been acquiesced in, and the powerfully delineated scene of our great dramatist has been pronounced altogether the groundless fiction of an event which could not by possibility have transpired. The whole question turns upon the date of Gascoyne's death. He was buried in Harewood Church in Yorkshire; and Fuller gives the following as his monumental inscription: "Gulielmus Gascoyne, Die Dominica, 17^o Dec^{ris}. 1412, 14 H. IV."—"William Gascoyne [died] on Sunday, December 17th, 1412, in the fourteenth year of Henry IV." If this were correct, there would be an end of the question; but the brass was torn from the tomb during the civil wars, and the copy cannot be verified. The inscription, however, as given by Fuller, is at all events self-contradictory. The 17th of December fell on a Saturday, not on a Sunday, in 1412.

The process of the argument, and the accession of new evidence by which we are now at length enabled to set this point at rest, are very curious. The Author, indeed, confesses himself to have been one of those who were induced, by the documents then before them, to believe that Judge Gascoyne died on Sunday, December 17, 1413, somewhat more than half a year after Henry V.'s accession; and although the late discovery of the Judge's last

Will proves that the argument was then sound only so far as it established the fact that he died after Henry's accession, and was unsound in fixing the period of his death at so early a period as December 1413; yet the statement of that argument may perhaps not be altogether uninteresting, whilst it may suggest a valuable caution as to the jealous vigilance with which circumstantial evidence should always be sifted before the conclusions built upon it be admitted.

It was then a fact upon record, that Chief Justice Gascoyne was summoned, on the 22nd March 1413, (the very day after Henry's accession,) to attend the parliament in the May following. When the parliament met, Gascoyne's name does not appear among those who were present; whilst Hankford, his successor, is appointed Trier of Petitions in the room of Gascoyne, and, in the case of a writ of error, brings up as Chief Justice the record from the King's Bench. Hankford's appointment as Chief Justice bears date March 29th, 1413; and he is summoned to attend parliament as Chief Justice in the December following.^a In the Pell Rolls a payment is recorded, July 7, 1413, of his half-year's fee to "William Gascoyne, late

^a Dugdale is unquestionably mistaken, and the many authors who follow him, in fixing Hankford's appointment to January 29, 1 Hen. V. 1414. He refers for his authority to "Patent 1 Hen. V. m. 33;" but no entry of the kind is found there.

Chief Justice of Lord Henry the King's father." The inference from these facts was undoubtedly conclusive: first, that Gascoyne's death was erroneously referred to December 1412; secondly, that he was alive and Chief Justice when Henry V. came to the throne; thirdly, that he ceased to be Chief Justice within eight days of Henry's accession, somewhere between March 22, and March 29, 1413. It was merely matter of conjecture whether he was too ill to discharge the duties of his station, and resigned; or what other probable cause of his removal existed. The conversation, at all events, which Shakspeare records, might *possibly* have taken place; though it is a fact, scarcely reconcilable with it, that Henry V. never did renew Gascoyne's appointment,—a proceeding almost invariably adopted on the demise of a sovereign by his successor. Henry V. might have offered to commit into his hand "the unstained sword that he was wont to bear:"—within eight days after Henry IV. had ceased to breathe, Gascoyne had no longer in his hand the staff of justice.

The reason which then induced the persons who argued on these facts to suppose that Fuller had by mistake adopted the date of the year 1412 instead of 1413 was this:—It was very improbable that the words "Die Dominica" should have been introduced by the copyist, if they were not really on the tomb. Hence it was inferred that he died on a Sunday. Now December 17th was on a Sunday

in the following year, 1413 ; and, since the date was in Roman letters, it was thought very probable that the last I had been obliterated in MCCCCXIII. The words, indeed, " 14th Henry IV," were also quoted by Fuller : but it was unquestionably more credible that those words formed a marginal note in the reporter's manuscript, and were mere surplusages, than that they should have been allowed a place in the brass scroll of a monument.

Such was the state of our knowledge, and such was the course of our reasoning as to the time of Gascoyne's decease, till within a very short period of the publication of this work. A document, however, has been very lately brought to light on this subject, which supersedes that statement altogether ; setting the whole argument in a new point of view, and reading a plain lesson on the care and circumspection with which inferences, however plausible, as to dates and facts, should be admitted. In the present instance, indeed, the conclusion to which we had before arrived, on the question of Gascoyne having survived Henry IV, remains unassailable, or rather, is only still further removed from the possibility of historical doubt ; and the whole argument on the vast improbability of Prince Henry having ever offered an insult to the Chief Justice, or of his ever having been committed to prison for any offence of the kind, remains at least equally strong as before. Most persons, perhaps, may consider the degree of impro-

bability to have become still greater. Be this as it may, the facts now placed beyond further controversy as to Gascoyne's death are these. In the Registry of the Court of York the last Will and testament of William Gascoyne has been found recorded. It bears date on the Friday after St. Lucy's Day in the year 1419; and it was proved on the 23rd of December following. In the year 1419, St. Lucy's Day, December 13, was on a Wednesday. The Will was consequently made on Friday the 15th of December, and was proved on the morrow week, Saturday, December 23rd. In the Will, the testator declares that he was weak in body; and the strong probability is that he died on the following Sunday, December 17, 1419.^o This would accord precisely with Fuller's representation of the scroll on the tomb, "on the Lord's Day, December 17." Whilst the facility of mistaking MCCCCXIX for MCCCCXII, (being the obliteration only of one cross stroke in the last letter,) is even more remarkable than that of the error which on the former supposition was thought probable, from the obliteration of the last letter I in MCCCCXIII.

The Author has had recourse to every means within his reach to assure himself of the genuine-

^o It must be regarded as a very curious coincidence connected with this argument, that the 17th of December should have fallen on a Sunday, both in the year MCCCCXIII, and in MCCCCXIX, but in no other year between 1402 and 1421.

ness of this document, and to ascertain that the testator was the William Gascoyne^p who was Chief Justice of the King's Bench. The result is, that not a shadow of any of the doubts which he once jealously entertained, remains on the subject; whilst he gratefully remembers the prompt and satisfactory assistance rendered him by the present Registrar of York. The document must be admitted without reserve.

From these now indisputable facts a thought might perhaps not unnaturally suggest itself to the mind of any one taking only a general view of the whole subject, that some countenance is here given to the prevalent notion that Gascoyne had displeased Henry during the years of his principedom; but that, instead of holding the worthy and intrepid Judge in higher honour, (as tradition tells,) and rewarding him for his noble bearing, on the contrary, the King resented the insult shown to his person, and dismissed him (contrary to the usual

^p The mention in the body of the Will of the names of his former wife, and of his second wife then alive, and the record of the Will of that second wife, who states herself the widow of William Gascoyne, late Chief Justice, preserved in the same register, fix the identity of the testator beyond dispute. The Author was first indebted for a knowledge of the existence of this document to the volume called *Testamenta Eboracensia*, published by the Surtees Society; though he cannot suppress the surprise with which he read the comment of the editors, the chief mistake of which was discovered in time to be rectified in an "erratum" after the work had been printed.

practice) from his high judicial station. A fact,^a however, new (it is presumed) to history, enables or rather compels us to dismiss such a conjecture from our minds. Whatever was the definite cause of Gascoyne's withdrawal from the bench as Chief Justice of England; whether his declining health, or an inclination for retirement and repose after so long^r and wearisome a discharge of his arduous duties, or the competency^s of his fortune, induced him to draw back at length from the turmoils of public

^a For this fact, and many others, as well as for most valuable suggestions, and assistance of various kinds, the Author is indebted to T. Duffus Hardy, Esq. of the Record Office in the Tower,—a gentleman who, with a mind admirably stored with antiquarian knowledge, possesses also the faculty of applying his stores to the best advantage in the developement of whatever subject he undertakes, and the principle also of employing his knowledge and abilities in the cause of truth.

^r Gascoyne had been Chief Justice of the King's Bench more than twelve years,—a portion of life considerably beyond the average duration of their office in those high functionaries. Reckoning either from Hanlow, 1258, in the reign of Henry III, or from Gascoyne, in 1401, in the reign of Henry IV, to the present time, the average number of years through which the Chief Justices of the King's Bench have retained their seats is below nine. Through the last century, however, (reckoning from Lord Hardwick's appointment, in 1733, to Lord Tenterden's death, in 1832,) the average has risen to above fourteen years.

^s He was in a condition to lend the King money when the exigencies of the state pressed him hard. Among other creditors, the Pell Rolls (14th May 1420) record the repayment of a loan to the executors of William Gascoyne, which was within half a year of his death.

life, and pass his last days among his own friends and relatives in the privacy of a country residence ; certainly he carried with him when he left his court, not the resentment and unkindness, but the most friendly feelings and respect of his new sovereign. By warrant, November 28, 1414, (that is, in the very year after his retirement,) the King grants to "our dear and well-beloved William Gascoyne an allowance of four bucks and does out of the forest of Pontefract for the term of his life."

The sum of the whole matter as to the historical representations of Henry's conduct is this :

Before the year 1534, far more than a century after Henry's death, no allusion whatever is made to any occurrence of the kind in any work, printed or manuscript, now extant and known. Sir Thomas Elyot, who mentions it incidentally as an anecdote, combining the merits "of a good Judge, a good Prince, and a good King," gives no reference to any authority whatever. Subsequently it is reported in detail by Hall, but with much exaggeration on Elyot's narrative. It then not only passed current in our histories, but served as a topic of grave import in our Prince of tragedians, and of burlesque in the broad farces of later and perhaps earlier days than his. The biographers of Henry, though they detail in all their minute particulars many circumstances of his youth, far less important either to his character, or as facts of general and national in-

terest, and who lived, some of them, almost a century nearer the date of the supposed transaction than Elyot, are to a man silent on the subject; not one of them betraying the shadow of suspicion that he was even aware of any rumour or vague tradition of the kind. Such facts as the committal to prison of the heir-apparent, especially such an heir-apparent as Henry (it is presumed), must have been notorious through the metropolis and the whole land, and must have excited a great and general sensation; and yet the Chronicles, though they often surprise us by their minute notice of trifling circumstances, do not contain the slightest intimation that any such affair as this had ever come to the knowledge of those who kept them. They are silent, and their silence seems natural.[†]

On the whole, most persons will probably believe that either Gascoyne, or Hankford, or Hody would upon such evidence, we do not say merely charge the jury for an acquittal, but would, on perusing the depositions, have previously recommended the grand inquest to return "Not a true Bill." Still every reader has the evidence fairly before him, and must decide for himself!

Should any one be disposed to think that ques-

[†] By the kind assistance of those to whom the state of the records of our courts of justice is most familiar, the Author has been enabled to assure himself satisfactorily that they offer nothing which can throw any light whatever on the question examined in these pages.

tions of this sort might well be left undecided, and that the settlement of them is not worth the trouble and research often required for their thorough investigation, the Author ventures to suspect that, in the generality of instances, such reflections originate in an inexperience of the vast practical moment which facts, the most trifling in themselves, often carry with them in the investigation of the most important questions. Doubtless, the wise man will exercise his discretion in not confounding great things with small ; but, on the contrary, in stamping on every thing its own intrinsic and comparative value. Still, in great things and small, (though each in its own weight and measure,) the truth is ever dear for its own sake, and should be for its own sake pursued. And it must never be forgotten, that one truth, in itself perhaps too minute and insignificant for its worth to be felt in the calculation, when probabilities are being estimated, may be a guiding star to other truths of great value, which, without its leading, might have remained neglected and unknown. In itself, a false statement, though generally acquiesced in, may be unimportant ; in its consequences, it may be widely and permanently prejudicial to the cause of truth. If viewed abstractedly, it might appear like a cloud in the horizon not larger than a man's hand ; but that speck may be the harbinger of wind and tempest. With regard, indeed, to those natural appearances in the sky, the most experienced observer can do

nothing towards arresting the progress of the threatened storm; his foresight can only enable him to provide himself a shelter, or hasten him on his journey, "that the rain stop him not." In the case of literary, physical, moral, religious, and historical subjects of inquiry, (or to whatever department of human knowledge our pursuits may be directed,) by rectifying the minutest error we may check the propagation of mischief, and preserve the truth (it may be some momentous practical truth) in its integrity and brightness.

Connected with the subject of this and the preceding chapter, problems of very difficult solution present themselves, a full and comprehensive elucidation of which would involve questions of deep moral and metaphysical interest with regard to the structure, the cultivation and training, the associations and habits of the human mind. Upon the merits of those problems in their various ramifications the Author has no intention to venture; and probably few persons would pronounce unhesitatingly how far on the one hand the facts of past ages (constituting a valuable deposit of especial trust) should be kept religiously distinct from works of fiction; or on the other hand how far the field of history itself is legitimate ground for the imagination in all its excursive ranges to disport upon freely and fearlessly: in a word, how far the practice is justifiable and desir-

able of bending the realities of historical record to the service of the fancy, and moulding them into the shape best suited to the writer's purpose in developing his plot, perfecting his characters, and exciting a more lively interest in his whole design. Whatever might be the result of such questions fully enucleated, the Author, with his present views, cannot suffer himself to doubt that society is infinitely a gainer in possessing the historical dramas of Shakspeare, and the historical romances of Walter Scott. Instead of putting the moral and intellectual advantages, the improvement and the pleasure with which such extraordinary men have enriched their country and the world in one scale, and jealously weighing them against the erroneous associations which their exhibition of past events has a tendency to impart, a philosophical view of the whole case should seem to encourage us in the full enjoyment of their exquisite treasures ; suggesting, however, at the same time, the salutary caution that we should never suffer ourselves to be so influenced by the naturalness and beauty of their poetical creations, as to forego the beneficial exercise of ascertaining from the safest guides the real facts and characters of history.

A P P E N D I X.

No. I.

OWYN GLYNDOWR'S ABSENCE FROM THE BATTLE OF SHREWSBURY.

HAD Owyn Glyndowr joined the army of Hotspur before Henry IV. had compelled that gallant, but rash and headstrong warrior, to engage in battle, their united forces might have crushed both the King and Henry of Monmouth under their overwhelming charge, and crowned the Percies and Owyn himself with victory; but the reader is reminded that the question for the more satisfactory solution of which an appeal is made to the following original documents, is simply this: Did Owyn Glyndowr wilfully absent himself from the fatal battle of Shrewsbury, leaving Hotspur and his host to encounter that struggle alone, or are we compelled to account for the absence of the Welsh chieftain on grounds which imply no compromise of his valour or his good faith?

The first of the series of documents from which it is presumed that light is thrown on this subject, is a letter from Richard Kyngeston, Archdeacon of Hereford, addressed to the King, dated Hereford, Sunday, July 8, and therefore 1403,—just thirteen days before the battle of Shrewsbury. It is written in French; but the postscript, added evidently in vast trepidation, and as if under the sudden fear that he had not expressed himself strongly enough, is in English. "His eagerness for the arrival of the King in Wales by forced marches, is expressed with an earnestness which is almost ridiculous."^a

^a See Ellis.

“OUR most redoubted and sovereign Lord the King, I recommend myself^b humbly to your highness From day to day letters are arriving from Wales, by which you may learn that the whole country is lost unless you go there as quick as possible. Be pleased to set forth with all your power, and march as well by night as by day, for the salvation of those parts. It will be a great disgrace as well as damage to lose in the beginning of your reign a country which your ancestors gained, and retained so long; for people speak very unfavourably. I send the copy of a letter which came from John Scydmore this morning. . . . Written in haste, great haste at Hereford, the 8th^c day of July.

“Your lowly creature,

“RICHARD KYNGESTON,

“Archdeacon of Hereford.

“And for God’s love, my liege Lord, think on yourself

^b This ecclesiastic was much in the royal confidence. By a commission dated June 16, 1404, he, as Archdeacon of Hereford, is authorized to receive the subsidy in the counties of Hereford, Gloucester, and Warwick, and to dispose of it in the support of men-at-arms and archers to resist the Welsh.* And sums, three years afterwards, were paid to him out of the exchequer for the maintenance of soldiers *remaining with him* in the parts of Wales for the safeguard of the same. He seems to have been not only the dispenser of the money, but the captain of the men. The debt, however, had probably been due from the crown for a long time. He was for many years Master of the Wardrobe to Henry IV; and during his time the expences of the court appear to have become more extravagant, and to have led to that remonstrance and interference of the council and parliament, to which reference has been made in the body of this work. Pell Rolls, Issue, 5 May 1407.—Do. Michs. 1409.

^c This letter is the more valuable, because, though the year

and your estate; or by my troth all is lost else: but, and ye come yourself, all other will follow after. On Friday last Carmarthen town was taken and burnt, and the castle yelden by R^o Wygmor, and the castle Emlyn is yelden; and slain of the town of Carmarthen more than fifty persons. Written in right great haste on Sunday, and I cry you mercy, and put me in your high grace that I write so shortly; for, by my troth that I owe to you, it is needful.”

John Skydmore's letter, dated from the castle of Cerreg Cennen, not only fixes Owyn Glyndowr at Carmarthen on Thursday, July the 5th; but acquaints us also with his purpose to proceed thence into Pembrokeshire, whilst his friends had undertaken to reduce the castles of Glamorgan. It is addressed to John Fairford, Receiver of Brecknock.

“Worshipful Sir,—I recommend me to you. And forasmuch as I may not spare no man from this place away from me to certify neither the King, nor my lord the Prince, of the mischief of these countries about, nor no man may pass by no way hence, I pray you that ye certify them how all Carmarthenshire, Kedwelly, Carnwalthan, and Yskenen be sworn to Owyn yesterday; and he lay [to nyzt was] last night in the castle of Drosselan with Rees ap Griffuth. And there I was, and spake with him upon truce, and prayed of a safe-conduct under his seal to send home my wife and her mother, and their [mayne] company. And he would none grant me. And on this day he is about the town of Carmarthen, and there thinketh to abide till he may have the town and the castle: and his purpose is

is not annexed in words, the information that he wrote it on Sunday, July 8, fixes the date to 1403: the next year to which this date would apply being 1408, four years after Kyngeston had ceased to be Archdeacon of Hereford; and far too late for any such apprehension of great mischief from Glyndowr.

thence into Pembrokeshire; for he [halt him siker] feels quite sure of all the castles and towns in Kedwelly, Gowerland, and Glamorgan, for the same countries have undertaken the sieges of them till they be won. Wherefore write to Sir Hugh Waterton, and to all that ye suppose will take this matter to heart, that they excite the King hitherwards in all haste to avenge him on some of his false traitors, the which he has overmuch cherished, and rescue the towns and castles in the countries, for I dread full sore there be too few true men in them. I can no more as now: but pray God help you and us that think to be true. Written at the castle of Carreg Kennen, the fifth day of July.

“Yours, JOHN SKYDMORE.”^d

Two other letters, which internal evidence compels us to assign to this year,—the first to the 7th of July (two days only after John Skydmore’s), the second to the 11th of the same month,—carry on Owyn’s proceedings with perfect consistency. They were written by the Constable of Dynevor Castle, and seem to have been addressed to the Receiver of Brecknock, and by him to have been forwarded to the King’s council. “The first gives us no exalted notion of the Constable’s courage: ‘A siege is ordained for the castle I keep, and that is great peril for me. Written in haste and in dread.’ The second informs us of the extent of force with which Glyndwr was then moving in his inroads; when threatening the castle of Dynevor, he mustered 8240 (eight thousand and twelve score) spears, such as they were.”^e

The first letter, written on Saturday, July 7, (“the Fest of St. Thomas the Martir,”) he seems to have posted off immediately on the news reaching Dynevor that Carmar-

^d The custody of Carreg Kennen (Karekenny) was granted to John Skydmore, 2 May 1402.

^e Ellis.

then had surrendered to Owyn, without waiting to ascertain the accuracy of the report; for, in his second letter, he tells us that they had not yet resolved whether to burn the town or no.

“Dear Friend,—I do you to wit that Owyn Glyndowr, Henry Don, Rees Duy, Rees ap Gv. ap Llewellyn, Rees Gether, have won the town of Carmarthen, and Wygmer the Constable had yielded the castle to Carmarthen; and have burnt the town, and slain more than fifty men: and they be in purpose to Kedwelly, and a siege is ordained at the castle I keep, and that is great peril for me, and all that be with me; for they have made a vow that they will [al gat] at all events have us dead therein. Wherefore I pray you not to beguile us, but send to us warning shortly whether we may have any help or no; and, if help is not coming, that we have an answer, that we may steal away by night to Brecknock, because we fail victuals and men [and namlich], especially men. Also Jenkyn ap Ll. hath yelden up the castle of Emlyn with free will; and also William Gwyn, and many gentles, are in person with Owyn. . . . Written at Deynevour, in haste and in dread, in the feast of St. Thomas the Martyr.^f

“JENKYN HANARD,

“Constable de Dynevour.”

In this letter the Constable says that Owyn's forces were in purpose to Kedwelly: the second letter refers to Owyn's purpose having been altered by the formidable approach of the Baron of Carew towards St. Clare. This was probably on Monday, July 9, the third day after the surrender of Carmarthen. The Tuesday night he slept at Locharn (Laugharne). Through the Monday, Tuesday, and Wed-

^f This letter was probably written on Saturday, July 7, 1403, —that is, on the Translation of St. Thomas the Martyr.

nesday, the little garrison of Dynevor were negotiating with him; for he was resolved to win that castle, and to make it his head-quarters. On that Wednesday, the Constable tells us, that Owyn intended, should he come to terms with the Baron of Carew, to return to Carmarthen for his share of the spoil, and to determine on the utter destruction of the town, or its preservation. By a letter sent from the Mayor and burgesses of Caerleon to the Mayor and burgesses of Monmouth,—the propriety of referring which to this very year can scarcely be questioned,—we are informed that the Baron of Carew was not so easily tempted from his allegiance as some other “false traitors” in that district; and that he defeated and put to the sword a division of Owyn Glyndowr’s army on the 12th of July,—the very day probably after the date of the Constable’s last letter. This fact, when admitted, increases in importance; because it proves that as late, at least, as July 12th, Owyn Glyndowr, though generally successful in that campaign, was not without a formidable enemy there; and therefore by no means at liberty to quit the country at a moment’s warning, or to leave his adherents without the protection of his forces and his own presence.

Copy of the second letter from the Constable of Dynevor :

“Dear Friend,—I do you to wit that Owyn was in purpose to Kedwelly, and the Baron of Carew was coming with a great retinue towards St. Clare, and so Owyn changed his purpose, and rode to meet the Baron; and that night he lodged at St. Clare, and destroyed all the country about. And on Tuesday they were at treaties all day, and that night he lodged him at the town of Locharn, six miles out of the town of Carmarthen. The intention is, if the Baron and he accord in treaty, then he turneth again to Carmarthen for his part of the good, and Rees

Duy^s his part. And many of the great masters stand yet in the castle of Carmarthen; for they have not yet made their ordinance whether the castle and town shall be burnt or no; and therefore, if there is any help coming, haste them all haste towards us, for every house is full about us of their poultry, and yet wine and honey enough in the country, and wheat and beans, and all manner of victuals. And we of the castle of Dynevor had treaties with him on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday; and now he will ordain for us to leave that castle, [for ther a castyth to ben y serkled thince,] for that was the chief place in old time. And Owyn's muster on Monday was eight thousand and twelve score spears, such as they were. Other tidings I not now; but God of Heaven send you and us from all enemies! Written at Dynevor this Wednesday in haste."

The despatch from the burgesses of Carleon, after stating that seven hundred men, whom Owyn had sent forwards as pioneers and to search the ways, were to a man slain by the Lord of Carew's men on the 12th day of July, records an anecdote so characteristic of Owyn's superstition, that, whilst examining his conduct, we may scarcely pass it by unnoticed. He sent after Hopkyn ap Thomas

^s This partisan of Owyn, who is here said to have gone to share with him in the spoil of Carmarthen, partook even in greater bitterness of his cup of affliction. He was taken prisoner and beheaded. The Chronicle of London asserts that his quarters were salted, and sent to different parts of the kingdom; but this assertion, in an affair of little importance, shows how small reliance can be placed on anonymous records. The King, by writ of privy seal, 29 May 1412, commands Rees Duy's body, then in the custody of his officers, to be buried in some consecrated cemetery. It had perhaps been exposed for some time. MS. Donat. 4599, p. 128.

of Gower, inasmuch as he held him Master of Brut, (*i. e.* skilled in the prophecies of Merlin,) to learn from him what should befall him, and he told him that he should be taken within a brief time between Carmarthen and Gower under a black banner. [The Author finds the next sentence so obscure that he leaves it to the interpretation of the reader.] “ Knowelichyd that thys blake baner scholde dessese hym, and nozt that he schold be take undir hym.”

In weighing the evidence brought to light by these original despatches, it will be necessary to have a few dates immediately present to our mind.

We have it under the King's own hand, that, when he was at Higham Ferrers, he believed himself to be on his road northward to form a junction with Hotspur and his father Northumberland, and together with them (of whose allegiance and fidelity he apparently had not hitherto entertained any suspicion) to make a joint expedition against the Scots. This letter is dated July 10, 1403.

Five days only at the furthest intervened between the date of this letter and the King's proclamation at Burton-on-Trent (still on his journey northward) to the sheriffs to raise their counties, and join him to resist the Percies, whose rebellion had then suddenly been made known to him. This proclamation is dated July 16, 1403. Four days only elapsed between the issuing of this proclamation and the death of Hotspur, with the total discomfiture of his followers in Hateley Field, where the battle of Shrewsbury was fought on Saturday, 21st of July, the very week on the Monday of which he had first heard of the revolt of the Percies.

If the dates relating to Owyn's proceedings,—some ascertained beyond further question, and others admitted on the ground of high probability, approaching certainty, with which the documents above quoted supply us,—are laid side by side with these indisputable facts, the inference from the comparison seems unavoidable, that Owyn was never made

acquainted with the expectation on the part of his allies of so early a struggle with the King's forces in England; (indeed the conflict evidently was unexpected by Hotspur himself;) that Owyn was in the most remote corner of South Wales when the battle was fought; and that probably the sad tidings of Hotspur's overthrow reached him without his ever having been apprised (at least in time) that the Percy needed his succour.

APPENDIX, No. II.

LYDGATE.

EXTRACTS from the Dedication to Henry of Monmouth
of his poem, "The Death of Hector:"

"For through the world it is known to every one,
And flying Fame reports it far and wide,
That thou, by natural condition,
In things begun wilt constantly abide;
And for the time dost wholly set aside
All rest; and never carest what thou dost spend
Till thou hast brought thy purpose to an end.
And that thou art most circumspect and wise,
And dost effect all things with providence,
As Joshua did by counsel and advice,
Against whose sword there is none can make defence:
And wisdom hast by heavenly influence
With Solomon to judge and to discern
Men's causes, and thy people to govern.
For mercy mixt with thy magnificence,
Doth make thee pity all that are opprest;
And to withstand the force and violence
Of those that right and equity detest.
With David thou to piety art prest;
And like to Julius Cæsar valorous,
That in his time was most victorious.
And in thine hand (like worthy Prince) dost hold
Thy sword, to see that of thy subjects none
Against thee should presume with courage bold

And pride of heart to raise rebellion ;
And in the other, sceptre to maintain
True justice while among us thou dost reign.
More than good heart none can, whatsoe'er he be,
Present nor give to God nor unto man,
Which for my part I wholly give to thee,
And ever shall as far forth as I can ;
Wherewith I will (as I at first began)
Continually, not ceasing night nor day,
With sincere mind for thine estate thus pray.

“ The time when I this work had fully done
By computation just, was in the year
One thousand and four hundred twenty-one
Of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour dear ;
And in the eighth year complete of the reign
Of our most noble lord and sovereign
King Henry the Fifth.

“ In honour great, for by his puissant might
He conquered all Normandy again,
And valiantly, for all the power of France ;
And won from them his own inheritance,
And forced them his title to renew
To all the realm of France, which doth belong
To him, and to his lawful heirs by true
Descent, (the which they held from him by wrong
And false pretence,) and, to confirm the same,
Hath given him the honour and the name
Of Regent of the land for Charles his life ;
And after his decease they have agreed,
Thereby to end all bloody war and strife,
That he, as heir, shall lawfully succeed
Therein, and reign as King of France by right,
As by records, which extant are to light,
It doth appear.
And I will never cease, both night and day,
With all my heart unto the Lord to pray

“ For HIM, by whose commandment I tooke
 On me (though far unfit to do the same)
 To translate into English verse this booke,
 Which Guido wrote in Latin, and doth name
 ‘ The Siege of Troy ;’ and for HIS sake alone,
 I must confess that I the same begun,
 When Henry, whom men *Fourth* by name did call,
 My Prince’s father, lived, and possest
 The crown. And though I be but rustical,
 I have therein not spared to do my best
 To please my Prince’s humour.”

This poem, “ The Life and Death of Hector,” was published after the marriage of Henry with Katharine, and before her arrival in England. Among its closing sentiments are the following, intended probably as an honest warning to his royal master, that in the midst of life we are in death, and that the messenger from heaven knocks at the palace of the conquering monarch with no less suddenness than at the cottage of his humblest subject. How appropriate was the warning ! Henry did not survive the publication of this poem more than a single year.

“ For by Troy’s fall it plainly doth appear
 That neither king nor emperor hath here

“ A permanent estate to trust unto.
 Therefore to Him that died upon the rood
 (And was content and willing so to do,
 And for mankind did shed his precious blood,)
 Lift up your minds, and pray with humble heart
 That He his aid unto you will impart.
 For, though you be of extreme force and might,
 Without his help it will you nought avail ;
 And He doth give man victory in fight,
 And with a few is able to prevail,
 And overcome an army huge and strong :
 And by his grace makes kings and princes long

“ To reign here on the earth in happiness ;
And tyrants, that to men do offer wrong
And violence, doth suddenly suppress,
Although their power be ne’er so great and strong.
And in his hand his blessings all reserveth
For to reward each one as he deserveth.

“ To whom I pray with humble mind and heart,
And so I hope all you will do no less,
That of his grace He would vouchsafe to impart
And send all joy, welfare, and happiness,
Health, victory, tranquillity, and honour,
Unto the high and mighty conqueror,

“ King Henry the Fifth, that his great name
May here on earth be extolled and magnified
While life doth last ; and when he yields the same
Into his hands, he may be glorified
In heaven among the saints and angels bright,
There to serve the God of power and might.

“ At whose request this work I undertook,
As I have said.
God He knows when I this work began,
I did it not for praise of any man,

“ But for to please the humour and the hest
Of my good lord and princely patron,
Who [dis]dained not to me to make request
To write the same, lest that oblivion
By tract of time, and time’s swift passing by,
Such valiant act should cause obscured to be ;

“ As also ’cause his princely high degree
Provokes him study ancient histories,
Where, as in mirror, he may plainly see
How valiant knights have won the masteries
In battles fierce by prowess and by might,
To run like race, and prove a worthy knight.

“ And as they sought to climb to honour’s seat,
So doth my Lord seek therein to excel,
That, as his name, so may his fame be great,
And thereby likewise idleness expel;
For so he doth to virtue bend his mind,
That hard it is his equal now to find.

“ To write his princely virtues, and declare
His valour, high renown, and majesty,
His brave exploits and martial acts, that are
Most rare, and worthy his great dignity,
My barren head cannot devise by wit
To extol his fame by words and phrases fit.

“ This worthy Prince, whom I so much commend,
(Yet not so much as well deserves his fame,)
By royal blood doth lineally descend
From Henry King of England, Fourth by name,
His eldest son, and heir to the crown,
And, by his virtues, Prince of high renown.

“ For by the graft the fruit men easily know,
Encreasing the honour of his pedigree;
His name Lord Henry, as our stories show,
And by his title Prince of Wales is he.
Who with good right, his father being dead,
Shall wear the crown of Britain on his head.

“ This mighty Prince hath made me undertake
To write the siege of Troy, the ancient town,
And of their wars a true discourse to make;
From point to point as Guido set it down,
Who long since wrote the same in Latin verse,
Which in the English now I will rehearse.”

In the poem called the “Siege of Troy,” written in different metre, Lydgate, addressing Henry, “O most worthy

Prince ! of Knighthood source and well !" thus proceeds to state the circumstances under which he wrote his work :

“ God I take highly to witness
 That I this work of heartily low humbless
 Took upon me of intention,
 Devoid of pride and presumption,
 For to obey without variance
My Lord's bidding fully and pleasance ;
 Which hath desire, soothly for to sayn,
 Of very knighthood to remember again
 The wortheness (if I shall not lie)
 And the prowess of old chivalry,
 Because *he hath joy and great dainty*
To read in books of antiquity
To find only virtue to sow
 By example of them, and also to eschew
 The cursed vice of sloth and idleness ;
 So he enjoyeth in *virtuous* business,
 In all that longeth to manhood, dare I sayn,
 He busyeth ever. And thereto is so fain
 To haunt his body in plays martial,
 Through exercise to exclude sloth at all,
 (After the doctrine of Vegetius.)
 Thus is he both *manful* and *virtuous*,
 More passingly than I can of him write ;
 I want cunning his high renown to indite,
 So much of manhood men may in him seen.
 And for to wit whom I would mean,
 The eldest son of the noble King
 Henry the Fourth ; of knighthood well and spring ;
 In whom is showed of what stock that he grew,
 The root is virtue ;
 Called Henry eke, the worthy Prince of Wales,
 Which me commanded the dreary piteous tale
 Of them of Troy in English to translate ;
 The siege, also, and the destruction,
 Like as the Latin maketh mention,

For to complete, and after Guido make,
So I could, and write it for his sake ;
Because he would that to high and low
The noble story openly were knowe
In our tongue, about in every age,
And written as well in our language
As in Latin and French it is ;
That of the story the truth we not miss,
No more than doth each other nation ;
This was the fine of his intention.
The which emprise anon I 'gin shall
In his worship for a memorial.
And of the time to make mention,
When I began on this translation,
It was the year, soothly to sayn,
Fourteen complete of his Father's reign."

Though this Preface was written when Henry was still Prince of Wales, the work was not finished till he had ascended the throne ; when the poet sent it into the world with this charge, which he calls " L'Envoy : "

" Go forth, my book ! veiled with the princely grace
Of him that is extolled for excellence
Throughout the world, but do not show thy face
Without support of his magnificence."

TESTIMONY OF OCCLEVE.

THE interesting circumstances under which the poet represents the following dialogue to have taken place are detailed in the body of the work.^a The old man addresses Occleve as his son, and the poet calls his aged monitor father.

Father. "My Lord the Prince,—knoweth he thee not?
If that thou stood in his benevolence,
He may be salve unto thine indigence."

Son, "No man better: next his father,—our Lord the Liege
His father,—he is my good gracious Lord."

F. "Well, Son! then will I me oblige,
And God of heaven vouch I to record,
That, if thou wilt be fully of mine accord,
Thou shalt no cause have more thus to muse,
But heaviness void, and it refuse.
Since he thy good Lord is, I am full sure
His grace shall not to thee be denied.
Thou wotst well he *benign* is and *demure*
To sue unto: not is his ghost maistried^b
With danger; but his heart is full applied
To grant, and not the needy to warn his grace.
To him pursue, and thy relief purchase.
What shall I call thee—what is thy name?"

S. "Occlive^c (Father mine), men callen me."

F. "Occlive? Son!"—*S.* "Yes, Father, the same."

^a See page 331.

^b The Author has not formed any satisfactory opinion as to the meaning of the phrase "his ghost maistried with danger." Perhaps it implies that the spirit of the Prince was not under the control of such passions as would render it a service of *danger* to prefer a suit to him.

^c In some MSS. it is "Hoccleve."

F. "Thou wert acquainted with Chaucer 'pardie?'"

S. "God save his soul! best of any wight."

F. "Syn thou mayst not be paid in the Exchequer,
Unto my Lord the Prince make instance
That thy patent unto the Hanaper
May changed be."—*S.* "Father, by your sufferance,
It may not so: because of the ordinance,
Long after this shall no grant chargeable
Over pass. Father mine, this is no fable."

F. "An equal charge, my Son, in sooth
Is no charge, I wot it well indeed.
What! Son mine! Good heart take unto thee.
Men sayen, 'Whoso of every grass hath dread,
Let him beware to walk in any mead.'
Assay! assay! thou simple-hearted ghost;
What grace is shapen thee, thou not wost.

————— Now, syn me thou toldest

My Lord the Prince is good Lord thee to;
No maistery is to thee, if thou woldest
To be relieved, wost thee what to do.

Write to him a goodly tale or two,

On which he may disport him by night,

And his free grace shall on thee light.

Sharp thy pen, and write on lustily;

Let see, my Son, make it fresh and gay,

Utter thine art if thou canst craftily;

His high prudence hath insight very

To judge if it be well made or nay.

Wherefore, Son, it is unto thee need

Unto thy work take thee greater heed.

But of one thing be well ware in all wise,

On flattery that thou thee not found,

For thereof (Son) Solomon the Wise,

As that I have in his Proverbs found,

Saith thus: 'They that in feigned speech abound,

And glossingly unto their friends talk,

Spread a net before them, where they walk.'

This false treason common is and rife;

Better were it thou wert at Jerusalem
 Now, than thou wert therein defective.
 Syn my Lord the Prince is (*God hold his life!*)
 To thee good Lord, good servant thou thee quit
 To him and true, and it shall thee profit.
 Write him *nothing that sowneth to vice*,
 Kyth^d thy love in matter of sadness.
 Look if thou find canst any treatise
 Grounded on his estate's wholesomeness;
 Which thing translate, and unto his highness,
 As humbly as thou canst, it thou present.
 Do thus, my Son."—*S.* "Father! I assent,
 With heart as trembling as the leaf of asp."^e

^d "Kyth thy love," means "make thy love known." Our word "kith," in the proverb "kith and kin," means persons of our acquaintance.

^e Bib. Reg. 17. D. 6. p. 34.

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